

Warning very long read. Its my first report and therefore I havent managed the art of keeping it short and sweet. Maybe next time when I go flat out I wont be as lucid and wont remember anything to write!

The preamble

Conventional wisdom, and perhaps commonsense dictates that you should treat the marathon with respect. I was entering the marathon fully aware that I was not giving it the respect it deserved and was hoping that this didnt come back to haunt me in the last 12-15kms.

Probably the overwhelming reason for my lack of respect for the event was that I didnt believe my event goal to be ambitious or fast that and probably some misplaced arrogance. The goal was to run at about 3.55 per km and come to the finish somewhere around 2hr45. Yes, the marathon is a long way and it is a decent amount of time on your feet, but I hoping that running it slowly would be the antidote to crashing and burning. I had long thought that running a marathon (ie making the distance) wasnt a hugely difficult task and that it was only when racing the event was there was a possibility of finding yourself in true difficulty.

For most people their marathons are the end of a journey, for me I was hoping my marathon would be the start of my journey. I was hoping that the event would validate the increased endurance focus my training had taken on over the past four or five months. It has been well publicised that I have been attempting to lay down a base for track season which I am hoping will take me well below 15 minutes for 5000m once again. The marathon would be the test of what sort of base I had built.

I felt a bit foolish predicting on the forum what I was planning to run given it was followed up by the statement Has done no specific preparation. My last run over 1hr40m had been 14 weeks ago (2hr30m), as I had been concentrating on consistency in my weeks rather than big peaks and troughs in my running. I had also found it pretty hard to get out for long runs on the weekend I my wife is a nurse and often works full days on Sunday (ie 7am 7pm). This meant I needed to look after my two boys and even to get a 90 minute run in I would have to get up at around 5am.

Confidence was taken from my increase in training over the past 20 weeks. Over the 20 weeks just finished I had averaged 23% more kms than the 20 weeks block prior to that. Every single run of mine was of at least an hour in duration and unless I hit 100kms I considered the week to be a failure, save for an easy week of about 80kms every five or six weeks.

Given the complete absence of specific marathon training, ie long runs, I did have some thoughts that I could try some last minute cramming with three two hour runs in the last couple of weeks. For once commonsense actually prevailed and I decided to keep my training as it had been.

In the four weeks prior to the marathon I had started to increase the pace of my training runs a bit, as I was keeping my eye on the track season to come after the marathon and knew I needed to prepare my body for the transition to quicker and harder training. My cruisy 4m35s runs had come down to 4m25s and once a week I would put in a solid hour at around 4m10s km pace. None of this was aimed specifically at the marathon, but I knew it couldn't hurt.

Although I wasn't showing the marathon huge respect I wasn't stupid enough to try and train through it. The week leading up to the event I made sure I had three easy days for me this meant the usual pace (4m25 per km) but instead of an hour I did reduced runs of 36 minutes (Sat), 41 (Wed) and 47 (Friday).

So going in to the event my goals were as follows:

- 2hr45m
- No crashing and burning
- Complete the event easily enough so I could run track two weeks after.

The morning of the event

I had booked tribe and myself into some apartments just near the shrine so there weren't any problems with sleeping in, parking the car or organising the children on the morning. After my four year old came into our room at 4am with a burst nappy and wet pajamas I was unable to get back to sleep. Upon my alarm going off at 5.30am I got up and into my pre-planned routine.

Had an English muffin with honey as soon as I got out of bed. Took a dump and then went down the street to get a newspaper. IGA Express was closed but hotel reception had some papers so I grabbed those and retreated to the room to read the news and kill time until I had to head off to the start.

Before leaving I managed another dump (although I have no history, I was paranoid about needing one on the course) and then set off for the start about 6.30am. Planned a very easy 10 min jog to the start before doing a couple of strides. Had only jogged about 2 minutes before I came across the 35km drink station. Had a bit of a talk to AW and surveyed the layout of the drink station. AW probably thought I was mad as I was a bit on edge. I know I was out for a gloried training run, but it was still a marathon and I probably had all the usual fears that marathoners have.

The race

About five mins before the race I rocked up to the start and entered the preferred runners zone. Saw Smoothy straight away wished him the best and then the same with Thorny. Smoothy was pre-occupied with Dozers whereabouts but he soon showed and further best wishes were passed around.

Rob De Castella is either quite an excitable bloke or had a bit too much coffee to wake himself up. In the minutes before the start he was ranting and raving all about the marathon and how it was the training wed supposedly done that

would get us to 30km and then it would be guts that would get us the rest of the way. This probably had the opposite effect on me as it made me reflect on the lack of I'd done (am I sounding like a broken record yet?). I also wasn't keen on having to rely on guts as this would mean a major meltdown and necessitate the sort of recovery that would ruin my track season before it started.

The count down to the start came and then the horn blew. Off we all shuffled. It was a really surreal feeling as people seemed to be moving in slow motion and there just seemed to be no sense of urgency. It was really hard for me to work out what sort of pace I was going but I knew that if in doubt I'd better be slower rather than quicker. I had enough sense to treat the actual running of the event with a bit of respect.

In the first few kms I ran past a Box Hill supporters and the Three Musketeers (PM, TW and Slips) as I referred to them in my head. I was pretty wired so I was jumping around like an idiot and yelling and screaming to all and sundry as I was having a ball but I also had 40km to go as well.

I wasn't really that confident in my pacing at such a slow speed but found myself running next to Mai Tagami, the women's winner from last year. The pace from the Garmin was about 3.53 and I knew Mai was pretty experienced so I just planned on running with her for the duration of the race. This worked until the drink station at about 7km when some little Japanese bloke passed us and Mai took off with her countryman.

Pretty much since the start a steady stream of runners had been passing me and plenty were going by REALLY QUICKLY. This had me baffled a bit as I thought they were a bit aggressive for so early in a marathon. I knew from the Garmin I was on around 2.45 pace and I also knew only 17 runners did finished quicker than this last year so I fully expected most of them to come back to me by the end of the race. At 8km I was passed for the last time I was not passed again for the remainder of the race.

I went over the ¼ distance timing mat at 42.20 and thought it must have been wrong as this would have put me at 2.49 for the full distance when I was pretty sure I was still well under four minute pace (on review 10.55 on Garmin was 41.22). Ran up near the GP pit buildings and gave some encouragement to the other milers on the way back. Picked up a Lemon-lime GU at around 11km with my second sachet of water. Never really used Gels before as being a bit of an old school man I generally thought only triathletes and Mardi gras boys were keen on them.

Came into Fitzroy Street after about 13km and saw the three musketeers jogging ahead. Was still feeling great and a bit playful so started whistling to them to get their attention. They gave me nothing so I whistled some more and after a bit they finally worked out that some mad marathoner was actually whistling at them. I was only expecting a bit of encouragement so was quite surprised when they started running next to me. They gave me the low down of Smoothy being on 2.24 pace, Dozer being on 2.29 pace and the rest being

somewhere in between. I showered them with some of my verbal diarrhoea, discussed the content of my proposed race report and unloaded some of my fears about crashing and burning. They ran with me for about 1km before PM complained about the pace being a bit quick which was a good boost. We then went our own ways with the boys heading down towards Elwood and me heading up to Port Melbourne. Saw Mitho somewhere around here and took his encouragement on board.

Pretty uneventful up towards Port Melbourne. Saw Alan Fallia riding on his bike so asked him what Lisa Dick was aiming for and managed a bit more small talk. Some bloke told me I was in 99th which surprised me a bit because was still on 2.45 pace and was wondering when everyone was supposed to blow up. On the way back I saw Cans and complained to him about the blister on the ball of my foot and mentioned it may have been caused by starting the event in a pair of socks with a hole in them!

Came up to the halfway mat and looked at the watch to see 82.02. Thought that was a bit more accurate than the 10.55km split but the Garmin had me at half way in 82.29. Dont really care which split it is but wouldnt mind the second as it would give me a negative split.

Ran into the three mustketeers at Fitzroy St (22km?). Had just passed my first runner. Was pretty keen on another GU and made a vicious detour (almost at right angles) to grab one (actually two) at the 23km drink station. By this point I was also grabbing two packets of water and stuffing one down my pants for later. I may have been undertrained for the event but I knew if I didnt drink and get a bit of energy in to me I would struggle as I was sweating a fair bit. The boys were moving well and we managed about 3.51 pace for this stretch and as we engaged in a bit more banter. Picked up a pack of about five more runners around this time.

Towards Elwood saw Smoothy still well in front of the rest but Brett and Thorny were together. Dozer was doing well and Bacchus was offering support from the sidelines. Run through the Life Saving club and was a little pissed that we then went further down Beach Rd I thought we would have just headed back to the city from there. Anyway, it didnt really matter as things were great and I was still passing people. Got some encouragement from House and some others whose identities still remain a mystery really need to get some contact lenses or prescription glasses that dont make me look like a paedophile (ie transitions lenses).

Saw Tony Wilson on Fitzroy Street and around then I was wondering when the slow down was going to come. I had been monitoring my HR and it had slowly been creeping up from 155 to above 160. From here until the end I tried to keep it under 160 as much as I could as I knew if my heart rate continued to rise it could only spell trouble.

Merged with the half marathon runners and after my initial disappointment at losing sight of other marathoners I was quite happy to be in a situation where I was continually passing people. Many in the Coolrunning community have

been up in arms at being slowed up by the half runners. I managed okay and picked a good line through the crowd.

Yelled Hi to Grunter at his pit stop and it was around here that my only worry emerged as my calves were getting tight now and then and I thought I may experience some cramping, but it never eventuated.

Went under the Arts Centre and up on to the tan where the scumbags gave me good encouragement. Didn't really know who was there as because I mentioned, I'm pretty blind without glasses. AW tried to force some Powerade on me but I wasn't keen and just grabbed a couple of waters. Soon after this I came across someone I assumed from the results to be Kedir Ahmed. He was in a world of hurt (2hr55 with a 1hr40 second half) so I offered him my second water which he gladly took.

Even though it was a training run I was getting pretty pleased with myself because I was nearing the end and so far had managed to avoid a meltdown. I think this saw me increase the pace a bit but I was still being conservative because I was aware it could come undone in the space of 100m.

Not long after I turned into Domain Rd where I came across AL and then shortly afterwards TW, PM and Slips who gave me a quick run down on happenings. GG then ran with me for a little bit. I told him I was feeling great except I had worries about my calves cramping. His advice was to not to plan any big sprint finishes. Told him I wasn't planning any big kick but it would be good if I could run a negative split.

Got back amongst the crowd for the last couple of kms. Congestion was pretty bad and managed to only shoulder through one person on the way to the MCG. Entering the MCG I was pretty happy because even though it was a cruisy effort I was still going to finish a marathon in a respectable time. That and it would get my old man off my back about when I was going to run a marathon.

The result 58th in 2hr40m40s

Official splits 82.02, 82.38

Garmin splits 82.39, 82.01 (42.21km)

(Full splits at the end)

Post Mortem

Saw a few of the boys after the race. Swapped war stories and had to rush off to me the tribe as I'd told them it would take me 2hr45 and I'd meet them at 10am and we had to check out of the hotel by 11am.

As we got back to our hotel I saw Troy. He was blown away with the efforts of everyone and promised to run next year.

Felt pretty good for the rest of the day and really felt that my 77m30 at Burnley was a harder run than the marathon.

The day after wasnt so great. Had really sore thighs (but had sorer in the past). Would really hate to see how I would feel if I had have run to my maximum. Managed 6kms in 30 minutes at lunchtime. Should be fully recovered in three more days if Im not stupid and take it pretty easy.

I really enjoyed the run. It went quickly, I was in good spirits and I didnt crash and burn. My fastest km, 5km and 10km sections all came at the end of the race and Im really looking forward to having a decent crack at a marathon sometime next year. I am under no illusions that even taking seven minutes off yesterdays time is a completely different effort but Im up for the challenge.

It was really awesome out on the course to have heaps of support and if I was struggling it may have made all the difference. Even people I didnt know were offering support because I was wearing the MMM singlet. I am really pleased to have found the MMM crew because even though Ive generally been doing my own thing for the past few months, I probably wouldnt have been back running if I hadnt have hooked up with the milers.

Well done to all the milers who ran and achieve PBs or otherwise. To Smoothy who crashed and burned, it is better to try and fail then to never try at all. The only time you cant afford to fail is the last time you try. I know you have really invested a lot into this years race but hopefully you can do it again next year and make the sort of comeback that Dozer has.

The marathon has shown me that my endurance training has been on the right track over the last few months. Now I just have to get stuck into some track training and hopefully get back under 15 minutes for 5000m where I think I belong.

Sorry about the long read but its the first time Ive written a report.

Now for the splits, and you though House was bad

KM Cumulative 5km 10km

1 0:03:52

2 0:03:52 0:07:44

3 0:03:58 0:11:42

4 0:03:55 0:15:37

5 0:03:55 0:19:32 0:19:32

6 0:03:51 0:23:23 0:19:31

7 0:03:54 0:27:17 0:19:33

8 0:03:59 0:31:16 0:19:34

9 0:03:58 0:35:14 0:19:37

10 0:03:57 0:39:11 0:19:39 0:39:11

11 0:03:56 0:43:07 0:19:44 0:39:15

12 0:03:54 0:47:01 0:19:44 0:39:17

13 0:03:53 0:50:54 0:19:38 0:39:12
14 0:03:56 0:54:50 0:19:36 0:39:13
15 0:03:51 0:58:41 0:19:30 0:39:09
16 0:03:56 1:02:37 0:19:30 0:39:14
17 0:03:57 1:06:34 0:19:33 0:39:17
18 0:03:56 1:10:30 0:19:36 0:39:14
19 0:03:55 1:14:25 0:19:35 0:39:11
20 0:03:55 1:18:20 0:19:39 0:39:09
21 0:03:55 1:22:15 0:19:38 0:39:08
22 0:03:51 1:26:06 0:19:32 0:39:05
23 0:03:52 1:29:58 0:19:28 0:39:04
24 0:03:57 1:33:55 0:19:30 0:39:05
25 0:03:54 1:37:49 0:19:29 0:39:08
26 0:03:55 1:41:44 0:19:29 0:39:07
27 0:03:56 1:45:40 0:19:34 0:39:06
28 0:03:55 1:49:35 0:19:37 0:39:05
29 0:04:00 1:53:35 0:19:40 0:39:10
30 0:03:58 1:57:33 0:19:44 0:39:13
31 0:03:57 2:01:30 0:19:46 0:39:15
32 0:03:55 2:05:25 0:19:45 0:39:19
33 0:03:55 2:09:20 0:19:45 0:39:22
34 0:03:52 2:13:12 0:19:37 0:39:17
35 0:03:51 2:17:03 0:19:30 0:39:14
36 0:03:51 2:20:54 0:19:24 0:39:10
37 0:03:58 2:24:52 0:19:27 0:39:12
38 0:03:52 2:28:44 0:19:24 0:39:09
39 0:03:50 2:32:34 0:19:22 0:38:59
40 0:03:50 2:36:24 0:19:21 0:38:51
41 0:03:47 2:40:11 0:19:17 0:38:41
42 0:03:39 2:43:50 0:18:58 0:38:25
42.195 0:00:50 2:44:40

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