

## PREAMBLE

Some of you may recall the [plea I made on this forum](#) in the hope of dampening people's expectations. As a result, pre-race predictions varied from sub-2:30 (those who didn't believe me) to 2:48 (those who did). Actually, come to think of it, both of those predictions were made by the same person (AL) who was hedging his bets depending on which Colin decided to turn up on race-day. The unsettling thing is that I had no idea myself.

Most are aware that I wasn't hiding good form on the sly. For the past 6 months my training and racing form has been there for all to see - like a yo-yo and bloody frustrating! The lead-up to this marathon had been a potted road, indeed: constant niggling injuries; frequent colds; several major projects on the go at work; Uni study; travel from Geelong 5-days a week; a house in mid-rennovation...running kept getting demoted down the priority list!

And my mind was always on something other than running. Even the night before the marathon I was lying awake in bed, not psyching myself for the hell I was about to endure but wondering what colour to paint the entrance hall - I was totally relaxed as I really had no expectation of what I would run and I didn't really care. It was quite refreshing!

Anyway, I had occasionally thought about what pacing strategy to adopt: 2:30 or 2:48? but the night before the race PM sent a text that said "Run your own race and you will do well". So I thought bvgger it, I'm not going to waste time thinking about it, I will just start running and do what feels right (in the vicinity of 3:40/k).

David Cook once told me that you are better off going into a marathon under-done than over-done. Well, that was my one redeeming thought at the start-line: under-done, I was.

So the next post is my race report. You could say it is a little bit "different" and I am not sure why I started writing it that way but when I tried to write it the other way, it all seemed a bit dull. So I stuck with it.

I hope you enjoy it. 😊

## THE MEMENTO

Collect my medal which is ceremoniously draped over a traffic barrier. For the first time in my sporting life, I look at the medal and think: "I am gonna get this little sucker engraved."

I am glad that wasn't any longer than it was. I am a mess. Starting to feel a bit emotional as I walk through the bowels of the MCG searching for a massage, a drink, a banana, a familiar face. Jeez I am welling up. That is the run I have been waiting for. All the thankless hard work that has amounted to not a single PB since February 2008. Amidst the haze of pain, there is elation.

There is Brett. Fantastic. Another PB that we ran together. I am thrilled for both of us, despite his finishing kick. I give him a man-hug.

It's over! Bloody awesome. Don't even know what the time was. Something under a minute barrier as the seconds ticked up from 45 from when I first saw the clock. I pump my arms like I am the first man over the line. I always thought people who did that were a bit retarded but right now, I don't care!

There are runners bloody everywhere. So much for the hallowed turf - it's like Burke St. Officials are yelling something to me. I have to cut through a stream of half-marathoners 3-deep to get to my finishing chute. I finally find the way and have 15 clear metres to run when I notice a Tasmanian team member about 5 metres ahead of me. Brett has just finished. Not enough time to catch the Tasmanian.

500m to go, in the shadow of the MCG and Brett has surged away. I have nothing. Bastard. Ran together for 17K, I carried him through his darkest moments and this is how he repays me!

How many bloody drink stations have there been lately? Better too many than too few but this is ridiculous.

But PM said if I got to 40K it would be easy from there. This is the hardest part of the run, by far. I thought we were going over Barrack Bridge but now it looks like Wellington Parade. How far to go? And don't say 2.195K because that means nothing to me right now!

A great swathe of fat half-marathoners. Farking everywhere. There's nowhere for us to go but to weave through the middle of them all. At this point, I am really not wanting to add distance to my run.

Ah Smoothy. R.E.S.P.E.C.T. That took guts. You put it all on the line and 5K of living hell is the consequence. Still moving well considering what PM Said.

Ahead I can see a gaggle of red singlets escorting the Smooth one through a rough patch. Great support for the man who must be in a world of pain.

Brett doesn't want to be seen anywhere near the guy wearing a back-pack so he tells him to F-off.

PM paces us up the hill. Feeling good so I clear the air with him about a few forum post that I didn't have anything to do with. PM tells us that Smoothy is walking.

There is a guy running with a backpack on. In my hypoxic state I wonder whether this is the Melbourne Marathon or some kind of ultra marathoning freak-show.

Up Birdwood Ave. I have been dreading this for 17K. Surprisingly, when I hit it, I am able to put it in the mindset of just another training run. A reverse lap

of the tan, or eleven.

Coming out of the tunnel I can see Whispy Whillets about 150m up the road. I am feeling OK. I have the upper hand on Brett.

Through the tunnel. This is hell. Brett seems to have the upper hand.

Turn left at the Arts Centre. Arghh! Running downhill hurts! This is brutal. Lucky I can see the end of it.

Nearly done on St Kilda Road. I wish the race finished at the Arts Centre like when I used to come and watch my Dad finish in the 80s. Unfortunately, that would mean this would only be a 35K marathon which would require an asterisk next to any PBs. Not a fan of asterisks so we march on.

GG collapses in a heap after 300m.

GG hops on the front and drives the pace. We have gapped Fatass. I sense his weakness and urge GG to go faster still. Feeling good. 😊

GG is limbering up in the distance in his racing flats. Is he doing strides?

30.1K. In a bit of trouble.

In the rarefied air atop Fitzroy St I realise it wasn't so bad. Brett gets back on the front.

30K. The halfway mark as my Dad says. Feeling good.

Cans reminds us about the upcoming Mount Fitzroy St. Thanks.

With Michael 15m in front, Brett and I settle in for a two-man effort. Anything can happen from here but I am positive about the situation.

Past Cafe Racer and Michael is running for home. I feel I could go with him at a push and can see that Brett is under pressure. I evaluate the next 14K and feel that I have a better chance of running well with Brett. We have run our last 2 PBs together and this Michael guy doesn't really talk so it might be a bit boring.

The 4 becomes 3 as the guy in the fluoro singlet trails off.

Michael drives on. This guy is like Grunter without the injuries.

Where the hell was Smoothy, then? Didn't see him near the turn. He must be 2-minutes up on us at least. He is leaving nothing out there today.

Seedy Bacchus at the turn.

This carpark is like a maze. Turn left, right, left again. I am a dragster - I don't

do corners at this stage. This seems like a cruel, needless insertion of the organisers.

Finally catch Brett and remind him that my tax dollars paid for his singlet so he had better get on the front and drive the pace. He doesn't.

How did he do that? He barely would have had time to close the door and he is back out running again.

Ducked into the toilets. Ripped off. I won't even get to enjoy overtaking him.

Only one of them runs with us for a while and my honest thought is: How did you get here? 10KG overweight, sweating like a pig, footy shorts. I check his number to make sure he is legit and hope people aren't thinking the same thing about me.

Moving nicely through the field. Catch the group at about 23K. Sort of hoping to relax for a bit but Michael wants to push on and these guys don't seem to want to go any faster.

There has been a nice group of about 6-7 who have been in front of me since about 5k. Finally I think they are coming back to us.

Go through half way (well, 21K) in 75:49. Bit quicker than I thought but everyone seems to be going a bit quicker than they thought.

Michael ups the tempo. Obviously not wanting our mediocrity to slow him down.

I ask the other guy what he hopes to run. He says 2:35. I say "perfect".

Running down Fitzroy St. See TW and he is excited. Great to see the boys in red on course.

Start to move away from the lead women. They have their own race to run and now I am hitched onto these two guys so go with it.

Albert Park is bloody beautiful. This really is Melbourne at its best. Proud to be Victorian!

The Pit Straight U-turn and I am running with 2 guys who seem to be moving well: Michael McIntyre and a guy in a fluoro green cotton singlet that says: "I eat white pages for breakfast", or something. It would have to be a 15-year-old singlet. His lucky charm?

So many people to run with. It is just group after group. Fantastic. Compared to Gold Coast where I was on my own for most of the way, this is brilliant.

6K in and it is all ticking over very well so far. Have hardly looked at my watch.

There's the 2k marker. I look at my watch out of interest: 8m40s and 2.3K.

Thank God for the Garmin. That will play with a lot of people's heads!

1K in 3:44. Running about 50th. Should up it a bit.

Smoothy is flying he has 30m on me in the first 300m.

We are off.

The McCann kid blows the horn.

## THE WASH UP

Firstly, I hope you don't think I am a complete psycho after reading that report.

Secondly, the bit about getting GG to put the pressure on Fat Ass was a joke.

But mainly, what I really want to say is thanks to all the Milers for all your support on the course. It wouldn't have been the day it was without you out there to share it with.

Where to from here? Possibly ChCh in 2010 if someone can convince me. Boston in 2011 is also on the cards.

Here is the data:

2:32:49

42.23K

3:37/K average

### KM Time 5K 10K

1 3:44

2 3:32

3 3:33

4 3:36

5 3:38 18:03

6 3:30

7 3:31

8 3:39

9 3:41

10 3:36 17:57 36:00

11 3:39

12 3:38

13 3:34

14 3:42

15 3:29 18:02

16 3:36

17 3:39

18 3:37  
19 3:37  
20 3:36 18:05 36:07

21 3:31  
22 3:33  
23 3:34  
24 3:36  
25 3:36 17:50

26 3:32  
27 3:34  
28 3:36  
29 3:38  
30 3:35 17:55 35:45

31 3:42  
32 3:37  
33 3:42  
34 3:39  
35 3:39 18:19

36 3:36  
37 3:47 (up hill)  
38 3:38  
39 3:41  
40 3:39 18:21 36:40

41 3:39  
42 3:30  
42.2 0:46 7:55