



## Event History

(Last updated 20 September 2017)

As often happens with clubs like the Milers, it's not until you take a moment to reflect that you realise what an amazing history has been created. During 2010 we set out to document some of the great stories that sit behind our events. Many people have contributed to this compilation, but none more so than Richard Does and life member Max Howard. We thank them for their time, effort and passion – Max has even got a stick man tattoo!

### **MELBOURNE MIDDAY MILERS MARCH MADNESS, AKA 5M'S.**

Back in the 80's, the Midday Milers (who were the Reserve Bank Midday Milers then) used to go up to Sydney in March every year for a challenge race against the Sydney Reserve Bank runners. The last of these was in 1989 (won by Max Howard) and after that it became clear the event had run its course so to speak, so the group came up with a new concept the following year; a team relay the length of King Island. This was the first of the 5Ms relays which we've run every year in March.

The concept is teams of four runners competing over a course of mapped out stages. Due to the length of King Island (80 km) every runner ran five times during the day, but this was soon reduced to four times over a distance of around 60km.

Teams have a no.1, 2, 3, and 4 runner in order of ability, selected school yard style by team captains. Although captains are provided with a seeding list, they are free to make their own selections and are ultimately responsible for their decisions. It is at the discretion of the committee whether the no 1, 2, 3 or 4 runners are captains for the day, although in recent times it has generally been the no 1's.

The pre-event banter regarding the merits or otherwise of the seeding order has become an integral feature of the event, but ultimately it is up to the captain to figure out who is hiding form and who is feigning injury.

A feature of the 5Ms is the specially designed team singlets that we produce. Life Member Alan Barkauskas had a contact in the printing game and for more years than we can remember he footed the bill. In recognition of Alan's contribution, from 2009 the runner of the day has been awarded the Alan Barkauskas award. Sadly we lost Alan to cancer during 2013, a Miler singlet hanging above his coffin during his funeral indicative of how important the club was to Alan. Remarkably, Alan's wife Maria insisted on supplying the 5Ms singlets in 2014!

5Ms courses have been through many of the forest areas of central Victoria and seaside locations like Anglesea, Bass Coast, Barwon Heads/Ocean Grove, Torquay and the Mornington Peninsula. For a while the Barwon Heads/Ocean Grove course became a regular fixture every 2<sup>nd</sup> year, with new courses being mapped out for the alternate year. However with ever increasing traffic on some of the courses, we now find ourselves transitioning toward safer courses.

In 2010, Geoff Nicholson not only kindly allowed us to use his property in Shoreham as the meeting point and start line, but also hosted the post race BBQ. With such sensational hospitality, it's hardly surprising that we have returned almost every other year since then.

Comprehensive maps, seeding lists and results are available from the results section of the MMM web site, as well as the occasional race report.



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### NIGEL AYLOTT RELAY

The Nigel Aylott Relay (usually abbreviated to NAR) is a team event similar to the 5Ms Relay, and was run in November for several years from 2001. By 2010 we were struggling to get decent numbers to the event, even causing cancellations in 2013 and 2014. With this in mind we reluctantly scrapped the event in 2015, although returned to use the course for the 2016 5M's.

Originally this was introduced as the "Spring Racing Relay" with a form guide published on the runners, like Melbourne Cup horses. The inaugural winning team comprised Mark Mathews, Wayne Williams, George Pagatelis and Max Howard.

This event is conducted over the same 53.6km course in Romsey every year, and was initially called the "Romsey Relay". In 2006, following the untimely death of MMM member Nigel Aylott, the event was re-named in his honour in recognition of his past participation and enthusiasm for team running.

The NAR starts in Romsey, about 60km north of Melbourne, usually under overcast skies and threatening rain. The runner form guide is distributed in the days leading up to the run, as well as a suggested seeding order that creates much animated comment and whinging about the merits thereof. Like the 5Ms, each team gets a roadbook with a map of the course and a sheet to record times. When all the runners are assembled team captains select their team school yard style – they are under no obligation to follow the seeding list - then there's a brief period for formulation of team tactics and support car arrangements.

Some of the more creative team names have been; "The Fundamental Errors", "Stuck in the 70's", "The Ashmatics & Dan", "Captain Spewtum" and "We've got George".

Stages 1 and 8 (the first after lunch) are 3km time trials in which each team fields two runners. Usually it's runners 1 and 2 in stage 1 and runners 3 and 4 in stage 8. After each of these there is a massed re-start and the run proceeds as a relay. Each runner runs four times during the day. The morning stages are flat/undulating however the afternoon throws up some monster hills, so team captains have to juggle their runners accordingly. A couple of stages require skilful navigation and there have been unfortunate, but legendary, cases of runners or support cars taking wrong turns, thus dooming their team to a day of chasing backs.

There is a lunch break at the rotunda in Lancefield, after which it's a short drive up the highway to the start of stage 8, the second time trial, which is a gentle but continuous uphill, followed by the stage appropriately titled "Big Hill", which is a not so gentle and continuous uphill. Reputations have been made and destroyed on this one.

The run finishes at the weighbridge on the Lancefield road, then it's back to the BBQ area in Romsey (which was the starting line) for a post-run BBQ and medal presentations. In 2007, wet weather forced relocation to the Romsey pub. The ghost that is rumoured to haunt the place was not sighted.

Usually the day after the race, full results on an impressively detailed spreadsheet are distributed for performance analysis. Unlike the 5Ms, the NAR is run over the same course every year, therefore stage records are a major talking point.



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### Nigel Aylott (1966 – 2004)



Nigel was a MMMer from the late 1990s through to his demise. A quiet unassuming guy who had a heart the size of a lion. Endurance sports were his love, including a bit of running with the Milers. Nigel would tackle a marathon with no specific training, and his times got better the longer the races were.

Nigel achieved success on a big stage which included winning the World Rogaining Championships in 1998 and the Australian Rogaining Championships in 2000 and 2001. As adventure racing developed, Nigel saw it as the natural progression from long distance running and rogaining. He quit his job in 2003 to become a full time Adventure athlete.

Nigel's Team AROC came second in the 2003 Primal Quest (US) race and were looking forward to going one better in 2004. On day 3, the team was going down a gully from Mt Illabot to the next checkpoint with Nigel leading the race. A large boulder was dislodged at the top of the gully. It narrowly missed the other members of the team, but further down, Nigel was not so fortunate and suffered massive and fatal head injuries. A number of MMMers were watching the race results live, and probably half the active members of the club attended the Memorial service to celebrate Nigel's life.

*"The adventure racing community has lost one of the most humble, unassuming, inspiring, and world class adventure racers around. It is a truly great loss."*

Nigel managed to fit in a couple of MMM Spring Relays into his schedule in 2001-2002, and his approach epitomised what the event represented. All guts, team work and support for his runners, and he didn't know what it meant to not give 110%.

Sporting Highlights:

#### Adventure Racing

- Primal Quest, Lake Tahoe, CA, 2nd place, 2003
- Wild Onion, Chicago, 1st place, 2003
- EcoAdventure, Cairns 1st place, 2003
- Three Peaks yacht race, Tasmania, 1st place (course record), 2003
- Mountain Designs Geoquest, Sydney, 2nd place, 2003
- Arrow 24 Hour, Melbourne, 2001 – 2nd, 2003 - 1st
- Three Peaks yacht race, Tasmania, 1st place, 2002
- Three Peaks yacht race, Tasmania, 1st place, 2001
- Eco-Challenge Sabah, Borneo, 3rd place, 2000
- Southern Traverse, New Zealand, 1st mens team, 1999
- Thredbo Enduro, NSW, 2nd place three times

#### Other

- Oxfam TrailWalker, Sydney, 1st place, 2003
- Australian Rogaining Champion, 2001 & 2002
- Oxfam TrailWalker, 1st Australian team, 2000
- World Rogaining Champion, Canada, 1998
- Victorian Rogaining Champion, Four times

Further details re Nigel can be found [here](#) or just google his name and you'll find it.



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### THE PETER MOOR RUN

Peter Moor was a Reserve Bank employee at the time that the Reserve Bank guys started running at lunchtimes in the late 70's, and the Reserve Bank Midday Milers was formed.

Despite being some years older than the others and having a medical condition that affected his coordination, Peter regularly competed in club runs for a number of years. Sadly, in 1991, Peter passed away. Peter had been an inspiration to the club and the committee decided to name the final event on the MMM calendar the "Peter Moor run", in his memory. Peter was also inducted as a Life Member of the club,

Originally, the final MMM club championship run for the year was an 8km handicap run around the Yarra River, between the Morell Bridge and Southbank.

In 1998 the event relocated to Albert Park and became two laps of the lake, still a handicap run but closer to 10km. Somewhere along the way the event was shifted to a Friday evening timeslot and was followed by the AGM. With such an attractive time slot and evening entertainment on offer it's not hard to understand why participation fell away. In 2008 there were just 6 starters.

In 2009 the Peter Moor run returned to the tan at lunch time and became a 2km blind handicap time trial with runners setting off at 60 second intervals. Participation tripled. In 2010 the event was moved to Olympic Park. In 2011 with Olympic Park scheduled for demolition, the event was brought forward to March. In 2012 the event returned to its customary "last event of season" position, this time on the 2-bridges course opposite the Pillars.

Being the last event on the championship calendar, the Peter Moor run is inevitably taken a little more seriously by those at the top end of the ladder. Here's how things have panned out in recent years:

2007 Miler stalwart Luke "LG" Goodman led new guys Shane "Slips" Fielding and Colin "Thorny" Thornton by 4 and 9 points respectively.

LG arrived at the start line in a blaze of controversy, claiming that injury had relegated him to officiating duties. Although arguably no officials were required, the guaranteed 20 points were awarded.

To overcome the deficit in a field with 11 starters, Slips would need to finish at least 4<sup>th</sup> and Thorny 3<sup>rd</sup>, and that's exactly what happened – Slips and Thorny producing the first ever tie in the championship, both beating LG by 1 point. Had LG competed and finished 8<sup>th</sup>, his name would also be on the trophy.

At the AGM later that night the "LG" rule was introduced whereby each member's worst result for the year would not count.

2008 Anthony "AL" Lee led David "Smoothy" Venour by 4 points. With only 8 starters, Smoothy would need to beat AL and finish top 3 to win.

The handicapper was unable to separate the two and so they started side by side. Smoothy soon asserted control and despite a nasty fall went on to win both the event and the title.



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LG struck back from the 2007 controversy to take out the veteran's trophy – though we still await evidence that he is as old as he looks!

- 2009 Stephen "House" Paine was leading the table but was unable to run in the inaugural blind handicap which left Richard "Dozer" Does, Colin "Thorny" Thornton and Andrew "Woolies" Coles to fight it out.

When the race was run and the handicaps were revealed Dozer and Woolies had tied for 3<sup>rd</sup>, meaning Dozer essentially won the championship by 1 second. Interestingly, for the second year in succession the previous year's handicapper had won the title – meaning Mike "Grunter" Bialczak would start the 2010 season as hot favourite

- 2010 All eyes were on a group of 4 separated by just 7 points, with Simon "Bevo" Bevege starting the Peter Moor with a slender lead. However the handicapper awarded Stephen "House" Paine some special consideration on account of he had competed in the Lake Kawaguchi (Japan) marathon 5 days earlier. House went on to run the 2<sup>nd</sup> fastest time for the day, 1<sup>st</sup> on handicap and jumped from 6<sup>th</sup> to 1<sup>st</sup> to claim the championship.
- 2011 With the race being held earlier in the year than normal, the handicapper had the benefit of studying results of the mile handicap that had been held just 3 weeks earlier on the same track. It clearly proved useful information with 21 runners finishing within 20 seconds. However Justin "Cans" Wilson showed his hand as a candidate for the pro-running circuit triumphing by 7 secs in completing the 2km in 6:11, compared with his 5:50 in the mile. For the second year running Emma "EM" Miller was left with the runners up prize (i.e.nothing!)
- 2012 Tony Hally had already stitched up the championship but it didn't curb enthusiasm for the event with 24 starters. Club president Shane "Slips" Fielding took the choccies, winning by 6 seconds from Bruce 'ATB' Arthur.
- 2013 With the Milers enjoying a surge in new members, 27 starters put their faith in the handicapper. Less than a minute separated all bar 2 of them, but it was Gerard "Coalminer" Koelmeyer winning by 7 seconds from Tony "Waterboy" Hally.
- 2014 The Milers membership had recently breached 100 for the first time with plenty of new faces getting on board. The poor old handicapper and seasoned campaigners never stood a chance against the wave of newcomers who either had no race results on which to gauge form, or were smashing PBs all over the place since courtesy the lunchtime training program. New members filled the podium, David Burnheim prevailing by 1 second from David Hartley. So new they didn't even have nicknames yet!
- 2015 A challenging wind confronted the 23 starters and made it tough for anyone to achieve their handicap time. Club president Shane 'Slips' Fielding precisely matched his time, but there was one further up the track with Dr Dave Velten prevailing by 8 secs.
- 2016 A record field of 42 assembled at Robert Roberts oval (better known to Milers as AOP, or Ashes of Olympic Park). The handicapper did a solid job with everyone coming within +/- 24 seconds of their predicted time. First across the line was Mark "Stods" Stodden, 3 seconds in front of the profusely sweating Nick "Undertaker"



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Tobin.

2017 39 starters at AOP including many new faces proved a tough gig to handicap. In the end it was a battle of old timers with life member Glenn "GG" Goodman being outfoxed by David "DDD" Doyle. DDD hadn't been seen at a Milers race in years, but clearly still knows how to con the handicapper given he started as the front marker.





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### MILE HANDICAP – ROGER BANNISTER AWARD

The mile is a classic event in athletics which these days is rarely featured, however the Melbourne Midday Milers run a handicap mile race every year as part of its running calendar.

The MMM Mile Handicap was first run in 1999, the inspiration of then club Secretary Tim Crosbie who also produced the trophy for the winner in the form of a framed picture of Roger Bannister crossing the line in the famous sub-4 minute run. The names of the winners are added each year, though the method for doing so seems to change depending on the mood of the victor.

Given the infrequency of mile races, handicaps are produced by devious means by the Club Handicapper, usually based on recent Corporate Cup times, or the MMM Mile Handicap time of the previous year, or for newcomers to the club; "what do you think you'll run??" Runners are lined up at the start and sent off based on their handicap time.

The original "accurately measured" course was out and back along the bottom of the Tan starting and finishing at the Corporate Cup starting line at the "Pillars of Wisdom". Runners turned around at the halfway mark, just short of Anderson Street. This point was marked by a spot of white paint on one of the rocks beside the track and in a number of these events Lou Ferrari would ride down on his bike and stand at the turnaround point like a human witch's hat. It's not often in running that runners get sledged or encouraged by a witch's hat!

The inaugural MMM Mile Handicap was won by Norm Franzi in a time of 5.11, with Mark Mathews recording the fastest time of 4.36. No one seemed capable of breaking 4 minutes however out and back around a sharp turnaround on relatively undulating dirt is perhaps a respectable excuse. In case more excuses were needed, the club historian has also recorded that one year featured a stiff northerly wind whipping up clouds of dust which the runners were gulping in at top pace. The temperature reached nearly forty degrees in another year.

To overcome these barriers the event moved to Olympic Park in 2009 where Luke "LG" Goodman broke the record for the greatest handicapper stooge of all time and won by the length of the straight.

By 2012 Olympic Park had been demolished so the event was held on a wind swept grass track at Gosch's paddock. Anthony 'Tilt' Lee thought he had the field covered as he swept passed everyone on the last bend. Alas shortly after crossing the finish line he learned Tony 'Waterboy' Hally had snuck under the handicapper's radar and finished a whopping 15 seconds earlier.

In 2013 the event was held at Melbourne Uni track. On this occasion the handicapper was on the money with track side video replays needed to confirm that Thai 'Snake' Phan had narrowly edged out newcomer Kristi Darby.

2014 saw Bruce "ATB" Arthur arrive at the start line as an unbackable favourite. Under enormous pressure from the bookies (or maybe it was the other runners) the handicapper buckled and took 5 secs off Bruce shortly before the start. Taking it in his stride, Bruce still took Roger home.

In 2015 we had a record 42 starters at the Ashes of Olympic Park (AOP) site. With so many new Milers having joined the club in recent months, getting a form line through the field was a



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handicappers nightmare. In the circumstances he did a pretty good job, but not surprisingly the podium was filled with new guys and James Dennis saluted for his first club title.

In 2016 we ran on the grass at Gosch's Paddock on a rather impressively measured out 400m track that a few of the group had set up just 30 mins before the event. In the first handicap event of the year club president Shane "Slips" Fielding prevailed in a field of 47 to take the lead in the club championship which he also went on to win.

2017 saw us back at AOP with 42 starters on a windy day. The ever sweaty Nick "Undertaker" Tobin managed to hold off the field.

Alas the 4 minute barrier is yet to be challenged.





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### **KILLER LOOP HANDICAP**

One of the club's endearingly tough runs on our calendar is the appropriately named Killer Loop Handicap.

In January 1999 Merryn Bellamy suggested a lunchtime run based on a training drill that her coach Tony Benson used to put his runners through. This involved a (roughly) 800 metre circuit in a figure eight shape, winding up the footpaths above the Tan near the "Pillars Of Wisdom", the Corporate Cup starting line.

The first time the MMMs ran this, the concept was to complete as many laps of the circuit as possible in 20 minutes. Afterwards it was unanimously agreed that this was a seriously challenging run, a "killer" in fact. Masochists that we are, we decided to make this a regular run on our calendar and it became known as the "Killer Loop".

From 2000 on, the Killer Loop has been a handicap event over 6 laps of the circuit. The first Killer Loop handicap was held on 15 Feb 2000 and handicaps were mysteriously concocted by the club handicapper, David Cook, based on runners' best Corporate Cup times up to Round 5 of that CC season, with an "X factor" of 1.4839 applied to give an expected Killer Loop time. No documentation exists to explain how 1.4839 was arrived at. The winner of the inaugural Killer Loop handicap was Colin Marson in a time of 18.26, over a fast finishing Justin Ganly.

In 2001 a whopping 25 competitors turned up, with Nigel Aylott taking out the event. The MMMs thrive on hard running and an event like this will always draw a crowd.

A few years ago a course change was inflicted on us due to works carried out by the Melbourne City Council, which effectively wiped out the top part of the figure eight. We made an adjustment and the event goes on.

In 2011 Paul "Bacchus" Marsh became the first to go back-to-back, the timing of the event coinciding nicely with his Melbourne Marathon build ups. Pressure for a 3-peat in 2012 was so overwhelming that a runny nose was all it took to see him DNS. Damien 'Damo' Arnold went on to claim his first Miler trophy.

In 2013 it was our national orienteering champ Bruce "ATB" Arthur that found his way around the course quickest.

2014 yet again saw a Melbourne Marathon prospect prevail with Rory "Racer" Heddles winning by a comfortable margin and laying down the foundation stone of his club championship winning year. Despite an unprecedented number of officials on course, Nick "Undertaker" Tobin somehow got himself lost – rookie mistake!

Given the surge in membership, an uncharacteristically small field lined up in 2015 with only 13 runners. Don't tell me the new breed of Milers don't like hills! Andrew "Woolies" Coles was a distant back-marker at the start, and a distant front-runner at the end.

Again in 2016 the field was small compared to all other events for the year, with 21 starters. The handicapper set some tough marks for a tough course, and only Dale "Rafa" Nardella ran quicker than his predicted time to claim the victory, having also won here in 2009.



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2017 and another smallish field compared to other events, with 19 starters. Are the Milers getting soft on hills? Not for the first time this year it was the front marker that never got run down, Rod "Rocket" Zlonzak the only one getting anywhere near his handicap to win comfortably.



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### WINTER ROMP

The Winter Romp is one of the MMMs oldest events, having been run every year since 1983. Somewhere along the journey it became the norm to run this on the last business day of winter.

This is a predict your own time event where runners nominate the time they expect to run then, without wearing watches, the runner who comes closest to their predicted time is the winner. This gives fast and slow runners an equal chance of victory.

The Winter Romp has the distinction of having its own trophy, featuring a wood carving of the stickman. The event has undergone many changes over the years, as described below.

The course first started from the club's original headquarters at the Reserve Bank of Australia at 60 Collins Street and proceeded via the Treasury and Fitzroy gardens, the MCG footbridge, Swan Street, Princes Bridge, along the cycle path on the South side of the Yarra to the Punt Road bridge and back via the MCG footbridge and gardens, making a total of 9.1 kms.

In 1988 club president Geoff York won the event by predicting a time of 41.11 and completing the course in precisely 41.11. After a body search failed to produce a watch, he was declared the winner. Over the years, quite a few runners have got within a few seconds of their nominated time, usually by knowing the distance and running it at race pace, however when "X factors" were introduced, luck became more critical.

In 1991 the course moved to the Hawthorn Club where club secretary Bruce Tudhope was a member. The course was out and back along Burwood Road and Yarra Boulevard after which participants enjoyed a BBQ in the Hawthorn Club's function room, followed by the pokies in the gaming room.

In 1993, still at the Hawthorn Club, an X factor was introduced which made time prediction a complete lottery. A torch was hidden at the turn around point which was to be found by the lead runner who would turn it on and head for home. As each outward bound runner encountered the torch bearer they would turn around and follow. Therefore runners were not all running the same distance. On a couple of occasions the torch was too well hidden causing most of the field to grope around in the dark and blowing away carefully thought out time predictions. In 1996 the torch could not be found at all and Chas Harcoan, who had nominated a ridiculously slow time, was the winner.

In 1997 the event once again relocated, to Albert Park, starting and finishing at the Palmerston Hotel, which at that stage had become the club's headquarters following the closure of the Reserve Bank in Collins Street. That year the X factor involved runners having to locate (in pitch black) a different nominated hole of the Albert Park golf course and report the par and distance for that hole. Everyone got it right except Max Howard, who couldn't find his designated hole (a problem that has resurfaced now he is playing golf).

In 2000 the Winter Romp involved three laps (6.22 km) of the Fitzroy Gardens. Up until then, the event had been run in the evening, after work, but in recent years it has been a lunchtime run of two laps of the Tan, anticlockwise, to make it a bit different from the usual.

In 2012 two large digital clocks were installed around the tan, one at the pillars the other at the half way mark. Needless to say this required us to change the course, so we moved it



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across the road to encompass 4 laps of the two bridges (Swan and Anderson St) course. Amazingly 3 runners finished within 9 seconds of their nominated time, Gary "GGO" O'Dwyer winning at 4 seconds.

Anthony "Tilt" Lee was pretty proud of himself in 2013, just 1 second off the mark. However in 2014 Mark "Stods" Stodden did the unthinkable and became only the 2<sup>nd</sup> Miler in 26 years to precisely predict his time (35 min 0 sec). 2015 saw Katie "Pocari" Siebold prevail with a far more realistic 17 sec gap.

2016 and Katie almost became the first person to go back to back, but her decision to stop for a short while just before the finish line handing the title to David "Bermuda" Alcock at 4 seconds.

2017 and it was Stods and Bermuda coming down to the wire and finishing in a tie at 8 seconds. Bermuda's back-to-back attempt thwarted only by the tie breaker rule which gave the nod to Stods.

This event even has a tiebreaker rule - No two runners are permitted to estimate the same time and in the event that two runners miss their nominated time by exactly the same amount then whoever ran fastest is the winner.



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### 3000M BIG QUAD INVITATIONAL

On 10 December 2009 Simon "Bevo" Bevege put this post on the forum that started the whole thing:

*I am planning on doing a 3000m time trial at Olympic Park on Tuesday 22nd December at lunchtime (12:30). I am keen like a few others to get under the 9min mark, but my chances of achieving this in the new year will be remote given I am taking a marriage-enforced break over most of January.*

*So I would love to get as many guys down as possible either to have a crack at it with me, or to provide a bit of pacing. Would also be interested in helping get together another group of guys maybe in the 9:30-10min bracket if there is enough interest. It is a great opportunity to get a 3000m under the belts before Christmas.*

Given his preference for triathlons, Bevo's quads are a little larger than the average MMM member, hence the name of the event came to be the Big Quad Invitational. Probably lucky we honoured his quads as goodness knows what else we might have come up with if we'd focussed instead on his tendency to get about in headbands and Skins.

So on 22 Dec 2009 the inaugural event was held. The pacers played their role and not only did Bevo go sub 9 min, but Luke "Fury" Yeatman and Troy "TW" Williams joined him.

Twelve months later and from 15 starters another 3 went under 9 mins, but none went back-to-back. Stephen "House" Paine, Colin "Thorny" Thornton and Rob "Thunderbolt" Schwerkolt showed themselves to be slightly better than the average lunch time runner.

With the demolition of Olympic Park commencing October 2011, the BQI has been put on ice in the hope that a suitable alternate venue might be found.



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### 3000M & 5000M HANDICAPS

On the back of a surging membership and great numbers at lunchtime, in 2015 we decided to expand the number of championship events, and thus the 3000m and 5000m handicaps were scheduled.

Held at the Ashes of Olympic Park venue, more than 30 starters participated in each event. With so many new runners in the field, and not much form to go by on many of them, the handicapper had many sleepless nights trying to come up with the numbers. Clearly experience still counts for something though with John "The Job" Hand (5000m) and Katie "Pocari" Siebold (3000m) smashing their marks and recording comfortable wins.

In 2016 we had 35 starters in the 3000m and 36 in the 5000m, but only 35 finishers in both with newbie Andrew Rancie picking up the pink slipper for a DNF. A close finish in the 3000m saw Keith Sharratt win by a small margin from Glenn "GG" Goodman and Chris "CC" Osborne, but in the 5000m the rapidly improving (after recovering from injury) Ewen "Smurf" Vowels won comfortably.

In 2017 only 8 of the 42 managed to beat their handicaps in the 3000m, with Nigel Dunn securing his first Miler win. A few weeks later 38 turned out for the 5000m to see club secretary Dale "Rafa" Nardella blitz the field.



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### **TWO BRIDGES RELAY**

The Two Bridges Relay was first trialled in 2015, primarily to give those Milers who for whatever reason had been unable to attend a 5M's or NAR a taste of what it's like. Teams of four, each team member to complete one lap of the Two Bridge's course – which runs anti-clockwise around the Swan Street and Morrell bridges and measures something close to 2km.

On the back of a successful trial, the event was refined a little and added to the 2016 championship calendar. Seven teams were formed and a great race unfolded as various strategies were deployed. Just 7 seconds separated the top 3, with Team Slips (27:08) just managing to hold off the fast finishing Team Fitter (27:14). Mark Stodden set the fastest lap with a 6:04.

Six teams fronted up in 2017 and again it was a tightly contested affair with just 21 secs separating the top 4. Team Smurf took the win in 28:18, with Stephen Paine recording the fastest lap in 6:25.





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### OKTOBERFESTRUN

The Oktoberfestrun was a unique example of Midday Miler madness - not so much a serious run but an excuse to have a bit of fun.

This was an orienteering event that required teams of two runners to get to as many designated pubs and correctly answer a question in relation to those pubs in a 45 minute period. Points were awarded for each correct answer but deducted for each minute or part thereof that runners exceed 45 minutes.

The event commenced with runners having to down a beer before they start running and again at the finish before their time clocks off. The key tactic was to know when to give the next pub a miss and head for home to avoid the penalty points. This meant allowing sufficient time to throw a beer down your throat ASAP at the end.

Until 1996 when we ran from the RBA in Collins Street, the pubs were in the CBD, Carlton, Collingwood and Richmond. In 1997 the Palmerston Hotel became the home base, and the course moved to the many pubs in South Melbourne and Port Melbourne. From 2000 the start/finish was at the rotunda at the northern end of Albert Park Lake. From 2003, due to unpredictability of weather and lack of light in late October, this became a summer event run in January.

Riotous highlights and lowlights:

1990 - Peter Phillips entered the upmarket Bobbie McGees and downed a beer in full view of several bouncers.

1993 - Tony Adams and Geoff Scott tied with Bob Stait and Ted Zgainski on 85 points. In keeping with the tradition of the event, a drink-off was conducted. The combination of Adams and Scott were declared the winners by a short half dribble.

1994 - Peter Neil set a record slow time to complete the course...one year!!!! He was run down by a car, carted off to hospital, and didn't actually cross the finish line until the 1995 Oktoberfestrun.

1995 - Geoff York visited 11 pubs for 8 incorrect answers. It appears he was attempting to answer the wrong question at the wrong pub on the wrong part of the map!

1996 - Ted Zgainski blew all chances of winning with an abnormally long stay at the Imperial Hotel answering the question; "how many panes of glass in the street level windows?" The intention was panes in each window, not all the windows. Ted assumed the later and spent bulk time trying to count the bloody lot.

1998 - The police were nearly sent in search of Tim Crosbie and Geoff York, who got back VERY late. Their combined penalty points almost balanced the aggregate total points of all the other competitors!

2003 - Glenn Goodman's inability to notice 6 really large tables outside one pub and correctly answer the question.



## Event History

(Last updated 20 September 2017)

### THREE MUSKETEERS

This seems to have been a short lived event, but was a unique twist on a relay.

Runners were seeded and hopefully even teams of 3 were subsequently selected. The format of the relay was biased toward the number 1 runner's doing the bulk of the work, number 3's having it easy and the number 2's somewhere in between.

For example, in 2004 the course was the 2km loop between the Swan St and Anderson St bridges. Number 2 runners ran 2 loops (4km) and handed over to number 3 who ran 1 loop (2km). The number 1's were the last to go and ran 2 loops (4km) before the whole team ran 1 final loop together (2km).

### SPEEDY GONZALEZ CHALLENGE

March 17 2009 saw the first staging of the Speedy Gonzalez challenge.

The 2009 race was run at Olympic Park over 200m and with good numbers of 16 runners turning out to race, three heats were needed to sort out the seedings for the finals. The fastest 8 finishers raced off in the A final with the next 8 in the B final

Speedster Matt "Greville" Griffin took out the A race in 24.77. Rory "Racer" Heddles also showed a big turn of speed that day to take out the B race. Footage is on the video section of the website for those who have not seen it.

In 2011, the race was on 14<sup>th</sup> June over 400m at Olympic Park. Numbers were significantly less this time with only 5 runners prepared to have a go at the one lap sprint. White Kenyan and Old Coot Shane "Slips" Fielding blitzed the field in the first 100m and went on to win comfortably in a reasonably slick 58.15.



## Event History

(Last updated 20 September 2017)

### MARG SWIFT RUN

This run is done in memory of Margaret Swift, a long time stalwart of the Melbourne Midday Milers and the ANZ Bank running club, who passed away in February 2001. Marg was elected to the MMM committee in 2000 but was forced to stand down due to ill health.

In years gone by a challenge relay race was held between the MMM and the ANZ Bank, featuring teams of three runners competing around the Fitzroy gardens after work. The MMMs and ANZ selected their gun teams and the other runners made up other teams. It had been some years since this event had been run and after Marg's death, as she had been a member of both the MMMs and the ANZ Bank running team, it was decided to revive the MMM/ANZ challenge, relabelled as "The Marg Swift Run"

The event is a team relay of three runners each running two laps of the Fitzroy Gardens (approx 4.15 km). The start/finish line is on the path almost halfway up the Lansdowne Street hill, so runners have a challenging uphill start and even more challenging uphill finish.

The first MS run was held on 23 May 2001 and was attended by about 50 people, including members of Marg's family. A total of \$521 was raised and donated to the Anti-Cancer Council. History records that the MMM team of Lou Ferrari, George Pagotelis and Mark Mathews narrowly defeated the ANZ team of Peter Fourtzis, Glenn Goodman and Wayne Williams.

The next two years saw the ANZ triumph. In 2003 the ANZ anchor man Dave Venour started the last leg with a handy lead over the MMM's Nigel Aylott and cruised to a comfortable victory. Endurance specialist Nigel later complained that the course was "way too short and far too flat". The MMM's B team included newcomer Alun Sainsbury, who ran faster than two of the guys in the A team. We had no idea of his ability up until then.