




TOKYO MARATHON 2016

LG Tokyo Marathon Report 2016

A little on the lead up ...

It was with mixed emotions when I got the email from the Tokyo marathon advising that I had been granted a “Semi Elite Start” (Fancy Japanese name for Preferred Start). There was a quick Homer Simpson like “WooHoo” followed immediately by, Doh! now I have to train through the heat of summer (the time of beer , BBQ’s , Christmas parties and generally anything anti running). About 30 seconds passed before I got the call from Rog informing me that he too had got one of these so called Semi Elite starts. I would be lying if I did not admit to the thought “***Thank goodness there is at least one other idiot doing this***”. After reconciling with the fact we had both been the beneficiary of a computer glitch or administrative error we quickly accepted the offer before someone realized their mistake. (it was only sometime afterwards that we worked out that we had consecutive numbers because our PBs were 1second different). It was quickly decided that neither of us would be able to architect a successful outcome and we had best get out of the paddock we had been grazing in, and into the increasingly successful stables of Bevo.

It soon became apparent that Duff, Malibu, “The Fury” and Katie had also suffered a moment of stupidity and entered, and with talk of JC and Bermuda doing Shep we now had a summer Milers marathon posse.



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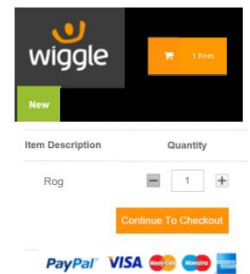
The Man

If you ever want to get to know someone, train for a marathon with them.

I was lucky enough to be raised in a running family, and see first-hand the relationships that my father had built through running. Anyone that has run a marathon will know the hours of training it takes (in particular the long runs) and the endless topics of conversation far beyond that of running, that have to be covered off in great detail just to get through the training program. There is so much that could be said here but to put it simply.. it was an absolute pleasure to train with Rog. A clear head that would set me straight and provide perspective in my moments of madness. Easy going and very accommodating when it came to fitting in the running around our busy lives. Then there was of course the “Mellings Buffet” that resided in the back of his car, and dutifully replenished on a weekly basis and then promptly raided by LG at the end of many a run... Generous to a fault.



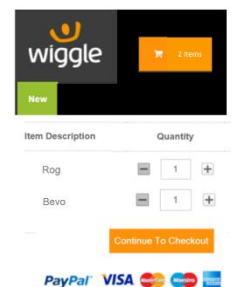
Having said all that It took us an entire training program, an overseas trip (with 2 x 9+ hour flights and shared hotel room) and a marathon to only work out on our drive home from the airport that our Fathers know each other and had worked together for many years. How did that one get through to the keeper? Take home point for young players... if you are training for a marathon do yourself a favor and get yourself a ROG. Not sure that you can get them on Wiggle.co.uk just yet.



The Coach

A big call out to Bevo - None of this could have happened without his tireless work, customizing individual training plans, sending instructions before key sessions, analyzing our efforts on Strava, and generally keeping us on track during the successive training blocks. All this, while maintaining his own training, personal life and working full time. What a champion.

Here is another tip for young players, you may as well add a Bevo to your Wiggle basket.



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"The miracle isn't we finished. The miracle is that we actually got to the start."

The report came perilously close to ending right here.

With Qantas club out of the picture and Jet Star flying out of the new terminal, the decision was taken to talk our way into the nearby Virgin Lounge...A great idea by all accounts apart from the fact that they do not call JetStar flights from Virgin Lounges. The result was what turned out to be our last unscheduled "long run" to the furthest JetStar gate, a stern talking to from the flight staff, followed by the walk of shame (to the delight of the already seated Fury) to be the last seated on the plane.

Following a failed attempt to follow Bevo's training plan and run in Cairns Rog was detained by immigration. I never quite got to the "bottom" of what happened in there, and after hearing the snap of the rubber gloves decided to inquire no further. Whatever it was sure made him run fast.

The remaining flight to Tokyo was relatively uneventful with the highlight being The Fury talking so loudly that the elderly Japanese couple near Rog asked to be moved. This was shortly followed by Rog claiming and demolishing the preordered Beef Sliders that were delivered to the now empty seats of afore mentioned Japanese couple.

Tokyo –

Got to the hotel late and had the usual sigh of relief that we had single beds, rather than the romantic queen sized bed that Lurch and I had been allocated in Gold coast last year.

Some pre- race high / low lights

- Finding Rog's jocks on the bathroom sink- "Planes, Trains and Automobiles" style:
- Ordering dinner on the first night from pictures, then getting the English menu after we had eaten. (Seeing The Fury's face realizing that he had eaten a tray of seasoned pork sphincters.
- Running around the Tokyo Tan (AKA imperial palace).
- Having the hotel accountants making real-time adjustments to the Profit Loss statement as Rog destroyed the breakfast buffet.
- The Fury becoming the self-declared subway expert. The phrase "often wrong but never in doubt" somehow comes to mind.



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- The Fury insisting on wearing his “Pre race throw away bright Yellow jacket” all around Tokyo. The positive was we could spot him amongst 13.5 Million people, and a few people asked for his autograph assuming he was winning a bike race.
- The Fury attempting some last minute altitude training with a trip to Mount Fuji, followed by carb loading with a curry donut.—What could go wrong.
- Going to a Japanese Italian Restaurant to do some proper Carbo loading.
- Generally anything involving The Fury
- Duff going into retail therapy overdrive. #moreshoesthanImelda
- The Expo and a number of silly photo’s
- Gourmet 7-11
- Katie’s cost effective Pocari Gloves (ask her for the details)



Race Day

After a quick breakfast we got our race kit and throw away hobo gear on and headed off to the start line. The Fury took advantage of the first port a loo he could see, only to get locked in. After some “earthquake like” shaking and a volley of expletives the toilet door burst open and the Yellow jacket was back with us.



Rog and I assumed a strut of arrogance as we showed our semi elite numbers and wrist bands to be ushered in “VIP style” to our rightful place near the Ethiopians and Kenyans. We wondered how Duff, Malibu, Katie and The Fury would ever make their way through the great unwashed and get into a good stride. The answer to our question was answered all too soon as we realized that Duff and Malibu were actually closer to the start line than Rog and I. The sneaky bastards had made a mockery of the rigorous selection process and pushed their way to the front.




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With 5 min to go we all got rid of any remaining Hobo gear that we had left on. Rog had already decided that my tracksuit pants were too good to piff and had officially procured them in his race drop off bag. Malibu tried to throw his gear into the bushes from mid-pack and managed catch a puff of wind that resulted in three small Japanese runners being subsumed by the aptly named parachute style 80's tracksuit.

The Race

- 9:00 the Wheelies get sent off. All last minute checks done. Satellites locked in. A few bromance hugs and well wishes.
- 9:05AM and the race starts.
- We all got a good start
- Even with the preferred start it is a bit rough for the first 500m
- First 5km went by in no time at all. Duff and I did quite a lot of talking.
- Somehow briefly met up with a friend (who was from Melbourne and now living in Tokyo) as he went past me in the first 5km.
- Lots of support and thankfully no diakons in sight.
- As expected the GPS was everywhere with the tall building. So I was mainly going by km markers and resetting the GPS every couple of kms.
- 10km all good and on track.
- The weather was fine and whilst not hot, warmer than I had expected.
- Duff and I got a look at the leaders coming back thru the 19km mark
- When through Half way on schedule and still feeling good.
- I had at this stage caught a glimpse of the Fury on one of the sections where we doubled back. He seemed in very good spirits calling out and loping along like a big friendly Labrador.

Trouble

At 24km in the space of 1 km my left hamstring that had troubled me all through this campaign decided that it was going to play up. My pace immediately slowed which was frustrating as it was limited by pain and range of motion rather than fitness.

- At about this stage I caught sight of Malibu who looked serious and locked into a steady pace, I had not seen Rog all race so I knew he was either very close or completely out. I assumed he was close.
- With the hammy now in quite a bad way I knew I was in for an unpleasant remainder of the race. I just tried to knuckle down and minimize time loss as best I could. I was



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trying all the normal tricks in the book. First goal was to get to 30km, then to 32km (where there was 10km to go), then to 37km etc.

- First minor goal achieved. 30km (01:58:24) still in under 4 min/km. I knew the numbers were a bit deceiving as I had already started throwing in 4+ min kms and I experience told me that any time in the bank would be chewed up fast.
- At about the 31km marker Rog came steaming past looking really smooth. I wanted to go with him but the hammy said NO. That said having the MMM red singlet in sight was an enormous help and dragged me through to my next two goals of 35km and 37km.
- By this stage the dreaded bridges had started to kick in. The first couple where not as bad as I had imagined and I was still catching the occasional glimpse of Rog.
- With 5 km to go the course had both km completed markers and km to go markers (obviously 200m apart). The left hamstring was now all but dragging on the road behind me and I was not a happy camper.
- The math was not good with 2 Kms to go. I needed 2 x 4 min Kms at that stage I had not done one of those for some time. It looked like a big ask.
- Any chance of a fast last km was killed off when I hit the last (and unexpected and unpleasant) bridge with a complimentary head wind.
- I have never been happier to see the end of a race.

Post Race

After stepping over about three collapsed runners I saw Rog and Duff, and managed to sneak into the official post-race photo.

The walk back to the bag pick up area took forever and involved all manner of cramping and muscle spasms, it was only the promise of the hot tub for our legs that kept me going.

Finally got to the hot tub. To say we overstayed our welcome was understating it. I am not sure how long we stayed there but it was dam good and I was most likely not capable of moving any way.

I am cognizant that others will also write reports so I will leave some of the tales of getting home from the marathon, dodgy train tickets, and some of our other nights out (Shabu Shabu) for others to tell.



The logo for the Tokyo Marathon 2016 features a colorful, multi-colored geometric pattern at the top. Below this pattern is a circular emblem composed of many small, overlapping colored squares. To the right of the emblem, the text "TOKYO MARATHON 2016" is written in a large, bold, black sans-serif font.

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Reflections

In the end it came down to the basics... the marathon is a long way and whatever you do don't stop. Other than that anything can happen on the day and usually does.

Whilst happy to get a PB I was disappointed not to go faster as I felt I was in better shape than 2:50. It was frustrating to be limited by an injury rather than fitness, and to possibly know that I may not run another marathon.

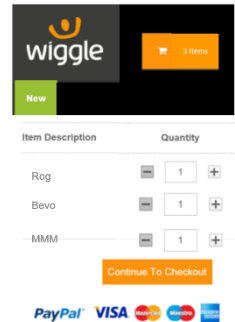
If I had my time again I would have:

- Got to Tokyo a day earlier
- Not walked so far on Friday (was pretty wrecked on Friday night)
- Stayed a day longer
- Not worried about the cold as much as I did.

Having said that I had a blast of a time and it was a great running experience overall. It gave me new respect for elite athletes that have to travel all the time and perform at the top of their game.

The Milers were a huge help in the lead up and a great bunch of people to train with. ***Last note to young players:*** Join the Milers. Fairly sure you can get that on Wiggle as well.

Also a special thanks to Hugo for riding with me on some of the longest runs. Fiorina for her support and putting up with me in general. (Even road with me on one longish run).



The logo for the Tokyo Marathon 2016 features a colorful, multi-colored geometric pattern on the left, followed by the text "TOKYO MARATHON 2016" in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The pattern consists of a grid of small, overlapping shapes in various colors (red, blue, green, yellow, orange) forming a larger, abstract circular shape.

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By the Numbers

Below are the splits from the day. Out of interest I added a column showing my splits from Gold Coast in 2014.

On the surface it would look as if I haven't learnt a thing. However at GC it was fatigue that slowed me down at the end rather than a pain limiting hamstring.

Point name Point	Split (net time) Split (Net Time)	Lap Lap	Gold Coast 2014
5km	00:19:10 (0:19:05)	0:19:05	19:14
10km	00:38:52 (0:38:47)	0:19:42	(19:24)
15km	00:58:33 (0:58:28)	0:19:41	(19:33)
20km	01:18:16 (1:18:11)	0:19:43	(19:45)
25km	01:38:05 (1:38:00)	0:19:49	(20:07)
30km	01:58:24 (1:58:19)	0:20:19	(20:20)
35km	02:19:22 (2:19:17)	0:20:58	(21:22)
40km	02:41:05 (2:41:00)	0:21:43	(21:29)
Finish	02:50:26 (2:50:21)	0:09:21	2:50:41(9:17)

