



David “Duff” Hartley

Road to Tokyo

Why Tokyo? Running Tokyo Marathon with LG, Rog, Malibu, Katie (Pocari), The Fury and Dr. Joe in 2016 and with Bevo in 2017 were such happy and memorable experiences. I love the Japanese culture and have always felt at home in the land of the Rising Sun. I still had plenty of fire in the belly to return and hopefully run another PB at Tokyo if everything fell into place. When the e-mail arrived to apply for the ‘RUN as ONE’ Semi-Elite men’s program (for times under 2:45), I was on like Donkey Kong! Joe Vaughan (The Dr.) whom I had met for the first time running together at Tokyo ’16 was also on board and in tip top shape having smashed Berlin Marathon ’17. It was super exciting to have a training partner along the way with the same goal in mind.

Tokyo Marathon ’17 had finished in very painful fashion and I felt broken in the aftermath. Upon returning home I signed up for Run for the Kids again in March. Team Captain Hoju had set up a Miler team that came in first with the winning prize a visit to the Nike warehouse to choose a free pair of Zoom Flies! Puffing Billy was next, followed by Gold Coast half, AV 10km in July and finally Dozer’s Devilbend half. By this time my body was slowly starting to recover again.

After holidaying in Fiji during August, Jess and I both returned home a little tubbly from the all you can eat and drink package arranged by our good friends at Treasure Island. A slight concern, however, was that I had already signed up for the Melbourne Marathon 3 hour pacing gig with Bermuda. Prior to the holiday this would have felt relatively comfortable. Post Fiji, sub 3 hours all of a sudden seemed a tough task especially with a pacing flag in the form of a giant spinnaker tied to our backs! Bermuda wasn’t exactly firing on all cylinders either, however we were able to help plenty of Marathoners and Milers break the barrier for the first time. It was particularly rewarding to see Jumbo and S’more finish in 2:59 as we entered the home straight inside the ‘G’. Bermuda provided extra encouragement with free of charge expletives to help spur Jumbo on. From a personal perspective, 3 hour pacing was exactly what I needed to prepare for Tokyo.

City2Sea was next in November for sadly the final time with the event now cancelled. Bevo advised me to run it at Marathon pace (around 3:45 per km) and I turned on the after burners for a quick last km to finish well ahead of schedule. The Sri Chinmoy tan relay was later in the month with the invincible team of Bermuda, Fitter, Obama and I winning the choccies again for a 3 peat success!

Training

Training for Tokyo '18 started officially in December under the tutelage again of SuperCoach Bevo. The programme was flexible and sessions would often change last minute depending on other Milers being available to run with. The most important thing was that I was out running most days with the Miler herd. The sessions that I found most beneficial were the 30-40 minute river runs with Bevo stable devotees Desi, Buster, Jumbo, and Dug who were all still in great form after Melbourne Marathon. Bermuda had run these 'Bevo Fartlek' type sessions for his London Marathon '17 campaign and I gained confidence for Tokyo replicating the same.

Training partner Dr. Joe was under the guidance of coach Bermuda and it was brilliant to run together when our planets aligned. I was able to keep up with Joe on the track for the speed sessions. It was a different story for longer tempo sessions. Joe's efforts were amazingly consistent; able to lock in and maintain a steady pace with metronomic like rhythm. It was inspirational to see the little leprechaun disappear past the horizon and over the rainbow in search of his pot of gold. With Joe miles ahead in training and fitness, it motivated me to try and bridge the gap before Tokyo arrived although time was fast running out!

The 56kms Two Bays trail run 6 weeks out from Tokyo was next. Fitter mentioned beforehand to run it as a 3:20 Marathon pace effort (Fitter was the 3:20 pacer at MM) which sounded like a pretty good idea. Thankfully Two Bays ticked the box just like pacing MM'17 had. It was incidentally the only week in the Marathon programme that I ran over 100kms. There were some queries from Milers (mainly Malibu ☺) on how many kms I was running as I'm not presently a Strava uploader. It worked for me to not overdo it – and regardless, old man Achilles issues tend to restrict my ability to run longer mileage anyway.

With only a few weeks to the start line Dr. Joe called and by the somber tone in his voice it was immediately apparent that something was wrong. Joe was out of Tokyo! It was incredibly sad on so many fronts as everyone knew how hard Joe had worked to get himself into the form of his life, only for injury to cut him down. Unfortunately, a sore foot that Joe had mentioned a week or two earlier had manifested into a stress fracture in his heel that required a moon boot and several weeks of rest to mend. Despite the disappointment that The Dr. could no longer run Tokyo, with a pint or two of Guinness already flowing through Irish veins, he was now committed to a drinking Marathon at the countless bars in downtown Shinjuku.

Succumbing to the worldwide sensation that is the Nike 4% Vaporflys, I snaffled a pair and tested them on the track for the first time running with Bevo at AOP. The Adidas Adizero Adios had previously been the Marathon shoe of choice like Bevo. With the 4%'ers it was love at first sight. There was no going back to the Adios. The Milers Mile event was next and it was probably the first time in the programme that I wasn't thinking of all the sore spots in my body and ran free. A few days later Bevo paced me for a parkrun PB of 16.28 at Maribyrnong. With Tokyo one week away all the pieces of the puzzle were falling into place at exactly the right time. A tune up from Leon – Voodoo at Melbourne Sports who prodded mercilessly, transforming me momentarily into a pin cushion was the final piece of the puzzle complete. I boarded the plane to Tokyo feeling confident that a Marathon PB was there for the taking.

Tokyo

Once in Tokyo I dropped the luggage at my home away from home, The Keio Plaza Hotel and set off to the Expo. The Expo was fantastic with a new Semi-Elite section including Bevo and I in the 27 Australian athletes from 2017 (left), and the Semi-Elite Australian athletes for 2018 were displayed as well (right). But it was all about the retail therapy; purchased another Tokyo Marathon jacket, running tops, Pocari gloves (to match Katie's 2016 'steal' ☺) and compulsory Tokyo '18 gloves to be all set for race day!

Promoting a Nationwide Marathon Movement Together with Marathon Races Throughout Japan

The Run as One - Tokyo Marathon program was introduced at Tokyo Marathon 2015 as way to contribute to the surge in marathon interest nationwide by linking up with other marathon races held throughout Japan. Offering the opportunity to take part in the Tokyo Marathon, this program helps runners experience racing at the world's top level, while striving to boost Japan's athletic capabilities and further expand the number of marathon fans. Starting from Tokyo Marathon 2016, runners from other countries will also be given the opportunity to compete in the Semi-Elite (Overseas) category, and this is expected to attract superior athletes from around the world. In addition, university student runners now have the opportunity of experiencing world-class competition with the establishment of the Semi-Elite Students category, which aims to not only foster the athletic capabilities of student marathon runners, but also help discover Japan's future runners and athletes.

| Location | Count |
|----------------|-------|
| 東京 (Tokyo) | 43人 |
| 北海道 (Hokkaido) | 47人 |
| 札幌 (Sapporo) | 46人 |
| 仙台 (Sendai) | 50人 |
| 横浜 (Yokohama) | 60人 |
| 大阪 (Osaka) | 149人 |

AUSTRALIA (AUS)

Naina Jerath, Jacinta Berlingeri, Georgina Kathryn Farrar, Ainslie Maree Chandler, Belinda Nicole Slee, Karen Skye Pienaar, Carol Ann Cunningham, Mao Okimoto, Helena Cairney, Angie Baran, Rachel Lara Glasson, Danielle Nicole Jansse, Toni Huia Heinemann, Rebecca Louise Brown, Aleisha Jane Anderson, Gary Wayne Mullins, Alexander George Rogers, Dean Simon Lane, Hamish Alexander MacDonald, Jason Robert Paisley, Christopher O'Neill, David Jonathan Hartley, Michael Jeffrey Boundy, David Alexander Criniti, Julian Matthew Spence

Dr. Joe arrived in the evening. With the moon boot on he wasn't moving in his usual speedy fashion. It was a pretty miserable day with heavy rain and wind chill about when Joe set me the task of finding him at a pub in Shinjuku later that night. I had to abandon the search eventually not realising at the time that there were multiple 'Hub' pubs in the near vicinity and my chances of finding Joe and the moon boot were remote. Once back at the hotel it felt like I had inherited a serious case of Malifu from the expedition. Being clogged with snot and feeling like death warmed up, I slept like the dead that night. Thankfully Bevo wasn't around to hear me snore!



Joe and I met up the next day and ventured to the Emperor's Palace AKA by Milers as the Tokyo Tan. Bevo's plan was for me to punch out 3 x 5 min reps at Marathon pace. The Achilles felt sore as always although it wasn't going to bother me.

The night before the Marathon Joe and I went out for dinner and relaxed with a couple of beers (for me) and many more for Joe. The Japanese cuisine is always delightful and despite raw chicken not tickling Joe's taste buds we devoured it all with relish.

Marathon Day

Arriving back late at the hotel, I missed a chance to speak to the SuperCoach before he went to sleep. Luckily with the local start time of 9:10am, I was up and about early enough next morning to Skype the great man whilst nursing his baby daughter Lila in bed (now that's a dedicated coach!). To go over last minute details and with the added benefit of Bevo having been there with me the year before was priceless. It made all the difference. Bevo had sent another inspiring e-mail upon my arrival in Tokyo. He had everything covered from remembering to tie up your shoe laces (one of my many issues! ☺) to pacing strategy. It was meticulous. It was my bible and made sure that it was digested fully into my not so meticulous brain. He has a way of making you want to run through brick walls to get to the start line.

There were some grand predictions on social media of times far in excess of what I was hoping to run. Whilst it was flattering to receive the support from the Milers, the plan with Bevo was always to run a PB and hopefully sub 2:40 as a stretch goal. I had some motivation to have a nibble at Bermuda's time of 2:39:28 (and Bermuda himself messaged to say best wishes and good luck in knocking off his time), however, I honestly didn't think that I would get anywhere near it with my lack of long runs in training.

I made my way to the start line and found a spot almost identical to the previous year with Bevo. My last minute thoughts were of the past 3 years that I've been running with the Milers and how far I've come. Starting out as one of the more rotund (fat) Milers, to now running Major International Marathons 15kgs lighter and as healthy and fit as I've ever been. I thought of my children at home and wished they were here with me. It all came down to this. Bevo had written in the title of his e-mail "The Moment of Truth". I was ready and wasn't going to let him down. The National Anthem is played and I get rid of all excess clothing as the countdown to the starting gun commences.

The Marathon

The gun is fired and we are away! It seems busier than previous years. Even though I'm near the front of the queue there are many slower runners in the way. I dodge and weave through the traffic without losing too much energy. The first km is relatively slow (close to 4 minutes), but it clears away quickly and I start to gain some momentum on the downhill start. The next 3kms are quick (possibly too quick). With the Garmin not providing any useful data due to the surrounding office buildings it's not until the 4km marker that I realise I've been running sub 3:30 pace. I immediately slam on the brakes and think "Bevo's going to kill me!" The 5th km is more sedate and I pass the 5km mark in 18:08 (net). There was a pack just ahead of me that I could have attached myself to although decide to peg it back and not withdraw too much from the piggy bank at this early stage. After the Marathon I was still thinking what could have been if I stayed with them – would I have run 3-4 minutes faster...or possibly 3-4 minutes slower?

The next 5kms are all about consolidating the early start. It's very easy to get carried away and think that you can run the same split again however keeping the hand brake on and being composed here was important. The 5-10km split is 18:27. I am feeling relaxed and strong at this point. Everything is going great and the race has only just begun.

The below photo is near the 10km mark which I pass at 36:35 (net) about thirty seconds ahead of where Bevo had indicated I should be at this stage.



One of the best experiences of the Tokyo Marathon is the crowd support with thousands of happy faces cheering on the athletes. I remembered from previous years the locals shouting out something that sounds like “Go Duff!” I have no idea what they are actually saying although any extra encouragement is appreciated whether imagined or real and it helps spur me on.

The 10-15km split is 18:35 followed by a 15-20km split of 18:41. Bevo’s guidelines were for each of the 5km splits to be around 18:40 for the first half of the race. As I pass the 20km mark it suddenly dawns on me amid all the excitement that I haven’t taken a gel yet. Bevo’s going to kill me again!! The all-important e-mail stated to take a gel every 10kms. Foraging a Raspberry Endura wedged down the front of my skins, I wash it down with a cup of Pocari sweat at the next water station.

The half way point is reached in 1:18:03 (net) around forty seconds ahead of schedule. What I don’t realise at the time is that it’s also a half Marathon PB! I’m still feeling fresh with plenty of juice in the tank. I knew from Tokyo 2017 that some of the hillier sections with bridges were coming up and that the next 5km split will likely be slower.



I found a small group to settle into just prior to half way. The benefit of this was that I could tune out and not have to think about pacing. The con however was A4520 in this photo. He had been drafting off the pack and had clipped my heels once already. When he clipped me again I gave him a spray that wasn't lost in translation. I avoided 'Clipper' by moving ahead of the pack and using others as a barrier to separate us. When he clipped another athlete I rolled my eyes and was glad to be free of the serial pest! The 20-25 km split of 19:02 was slower as expected, followed by the 25 -30km split of 19:10 which was the slowest of the Marathon. Post-race I looked back and maybe felt that I was too conservative at this stage but it's a tough balance to get right. It may have cost me one or two minutes although the potential cost of over cooking it and losing form over the final stages kept me from pressing the button just yet.

Bevo's guidelines were to keep the 5km splits for the second half under 19:15 to attain sub 2:40 glory. I knew the long held dream was in the bag avoiding any blow outs. With the Garmin still not providing correct km splits it was difficult to judge pacing. Luckily, I had a rough mathematical guide in my head of the time that I needed to be at for each km marker. With the weather remaining cool hydration wasn't a major factor. I still maintained regular drinks and had taken a second gel at the 26km mark. To get back on schedule with the gel intake, I intended to take the third and final Endura at the 30km mark. When fumbling around to rip the seal however the gel slipped out of my hand and fell to the ground. Despite an instant "Oh f@#!" thought it passed quickly. I have never been a big gel person anyway and with 12 kms to go was confident that I had enough fuel to get to the end in one piece.



Moreover, I'm boosted with the knowledge that the bridges are now finished with and it's flat to the finish line. The 30-35km split returns to sub 19 minutes with 18:52. This is with the aid of a slight tail wind. It's around the 35km mark that I feel a twinge in my left hamstring. It's not bothering me maintaining the current pace, only when lifting the tempo. The true test comes in the next 5km split when the tail wind becomes a head wind after another turnaround point. There isn't much protection from the breeze here and many are struggling to hang on. Despite the hammy giving me a slight issue I'm able to maintain sub 3:50 pace into the breeze. The 35-40km split is 19:03 which is pleasing nearing the finish.

The night before the Marathon I had a vision of being here in this exact moment. I dreamt of reaching the 40km mark in under 2:30 which happens with 2 seconds to spare - 2:29:58 (net) and letting it rip once there. With 2.195kms to go it's now or never. It's time to press the button.



Like a prayer a Guardian Angel is sent from above in the form of my new best mate 'Benjamin' Franklin (B75151) and it becomes a race within a race. We hit the 40km mark together at exactly the same time and it is on!

Despite our faces showing the strain, on the inside we are smiling and loving the contest, sharing a laugh.

Working together we fly towards the end. It's almost over.

We turn the final corner together and come to the home straight with the Imperial Palace in sight. The last 200 metres are in full sprint mode, up on our toes with arms pumping. Franklin and I cross the finish line in perfect synchronisation.

There were moments towards the end when I became emotional. Tears flow freely now that it's done.

I'm totally overwhelmed with the result. I can't believe that I've run 2:37! It is everything that I hoped it would be to achieve this. Strangely it almost felt 'too easy' as apart from the hammy being a little sore I feel that I could run another Marathon finishing full of beans. It is the opposite to the previous year where it hurt so much and took so much more out of me to finish. No complaints though, I'll take the time!

Post-Race

Franklin and I share a hug and get a happy snap together 'Brothers in Arms'. Thanks to Malibu for finding this in the official Tokyo photos:

<https://www.marathon.tokyo/2018/gallery/photos/lists/index08.html>



Then it's the long walk back to the changing area. Feeling relatively spritely it takes half the time from the previous year to walk the 1-2kms to where a patient Bevo had waited an eternity for me.

Once changed I look out for Joe who eventually arrives with dastardly dreaded moon boot in tow to join in the celebrations. He had been out on course and had seen me cross the 30km mark and had yelled out although being in the zone I didn't hear him. The half blood hound in Joe can smell a beer a mile off and we have a quick cleanser straight away to kick start the proceedings. Gotta replace those lost carbs! We later find an all you can eat and drink sushi place which is smashed to the extent that we are dragged out Homer Simpson style from The Frying Dutchman.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MlrMmYDgh1g&feature=youtu.be>

The celebrations continue well into the night. Probably fair to say that Joe's drinking ability outweighed Bevo's from the previous year by about 100 to 1.



The plan for the next day was originally to catch the shinkansen to Hiroshima although I was in no state to navigate my way around a new city. Joe and I bid farewell with The Dr. making a pit stop via Hong Kong on the way home. It's sad to say goodbye to the loveable leprechaun. Before departing ways, Joe's final task is to be the support crew as we groggily stumble our way to the train station. I venture back to Kyoto and beautiful Nara revisiting magnificent temples from earlier trips and discover some new places of tranquility. It's the perfect tonic post Marathon to be at peace and reflect away from hectic Tokyo.

Bevo had updated the 5km splits of the Marathon with in depth analysis matching the great Phil Liggett. When I finally got around to reading all the Miler posts pre, during and after the race it was incredible to feel all the love and support from everyone. It was the icing on the cake. Slips had calculated that the final 2.195 kms were completed at 3:31 km pace with the 40km – Finish split of 7:44.

Sayonara and see you next year

I may have mentioned Bevo once or twice so one more time can't hurt. Thanks to the great man for all of the reasons outlined in this report. From a small band of Milers that originally included JC, Bermuda, Fitter, Courts, Metric and I, the stables have quadrupled in numbers which is testament to Bevo's dedication to his disciples and coaching prowess. To Dr. Joe for being a magnificent training, and more importantly traveling companion. It was awesome to share the Tokyo 18 experience with you always having a smile on your face despite not running. To all the Milers in general, the friendships made are enduring and this is shown by being in each others lives outside of running - sure when we're not running JC, Malibu, Bermuda, Bevo, Fitter, Desi, Dug (and many others) we are most likely talking about running but that still counts! 😊 Thanks finally to Jess for your love and support along the way. In all the lead up events on the Road to Tokyo we've been there together having fun and achieving what we've set out to do. It's been a fantastic journey to share it with you.

What's Next?

At the time of writing I cancelled my entry into Berlin Marathon '18 being a long way from PB shape. With Eliud Kipchoge, the greatest Marathoner of all breaking the World Record time in 2:01:39 it has inspired me (with no shortage of FOMO issues) to tick off Berlin from the bucket list. Hopefully a 'Road to Berlin' report is on the horizon, running the fastest Marathon in the world with the fastest Marathoner the world has ever seen.

In the meantime I'm pacing the sub 3 hour group at Melbourne Marathon again as a stepping stone for Tokyo Marathon '19 for the last, last and very final time with an all-star Miler cast ready to smash it. Target time is set to be faster than whatever Bermuda runs at Melbourne Marathon. Can't wait!! 😊



TOKYO MARATHON 2018



TOKYO MARATHON 2018

記録証 CERTIFICATE



ABBOTT
WORLD MARATHON MAJORS
TOKYO BOSTON LONDON BERLIN CHICAGO NEW YORK

XI
SERIES

2018年2月25日
February 25, 2018

ナンバー
NUMBER 8087

David Jonathan Hartley

記録
TIME

2:37:55

種目
EVENT

マラソン男子
Marathon Men

順位
PLACE

341位 / 26611人中

ネットタイム(参考)
NET TIME

2:37:42

年代別順位(ネット)
PLACE BY AGE GROUPS

マラソン男子40歳~44歳
30位 / 4338人中

男女総合順位(グロス)
OVERALL PLACE (GROSS)

354位 / 34510人中

男女総合順位(ネット)
OVERALL PLACE (NET)

352位 / 34510人中



RUN ONE
TOKYO MARATHON 2018

準エリート
SEMI-ELITE ATHLETES

準エリート男子の部
241位 / 831人中

| 通過点 POINT | スプリットタイム SPLIT | ラップタイム LAP |
|--------------|-------------------|---------------|
| 5km | 18:21 | 18:27 |
| 10km | 36:48 | 18:35 |
| 15km | 55:23 | 18:41 |
| 20km | 1:14:04 | |
| 中間点 | 1:18:16 | 19:02 |
| 25km | 1:33:06 | 19:10 |
| 30km | 1:52:16 | 18:52 |
| 35km | 2:11:08 | 19:03 |
| 40km | 2:30:11 | 7:44 |
| FINISH | 2:37:55 | |



Tokyo Marathon 2018 photo gallery









