



MARATHON RUNNING IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

CENTENARY 21 August 1920–2020

RE-ENACTMENT of the FIRST EVENT

Notice No. 1

Wednesday 24 June 2020

Welcome to the first weekly notice about an event now rapidly approaching us, with less than two months to go. I felt I could not wait any longer to start doing some sort of organisation for it as potential participants need to make their own arrangements, especially those living outside of Adelaide. I've been waiting to see what the fate of the rescheduled Adelaide Marathon (from 31 May to 23 August) is because this could impact severely on the re-enactment if Adelaide has to be cancelled all together. The last thing I want is for people to suddenly find out at the last minute that there is an alternative marathon being staged and just descend on us in droves. Therefore it's time to put my own thoughts down on how I see the re-enactment happening and to receive feedback and suggestions from people intending to take part, either participating themselves or supporting someone who is.

Status of the event

Although it's a marathon it is a *social* event only, similar to the Christmas Day Fanatics Half Marathon and therefore everyone takes part at their own risk. There will not be an entry fee unless there is a high demand to have this event recognised for official lists such as the 100 Marathon Club or similar. I need to check but I understand that the criteria are that it has to be advertised in advance (tick); there has to be an entry fee (not planned) and there have to be a minimum of *seven* finishers (that's up to you). If there is to be an entry fee I expect a nominal five dollars will suffice, which would be donated to charity.

Safety considerations

There are several aspects to this. First and foremost is the legal requirement with regards to the COVID-19 situation. There should be no problems for us because I'm not expecting a large group of people to be gathered together at any time, given the nature of the proposed start/finish arrangements (see below). However everything still seems to be "play it by ear" and if the situation suddenly deteriorates and the government reintroduces restrictions, then this event *may* be reduced to an individual "training run" only assuming exercise will still be permitted. As a guide – if the Adelaide Marathon goes ahead then so can the re-enactment as a semi-structured social run with some facilities and rewards.

Other safety factors are concerned with the logistics of the event itself – the nature of the course being on city and suburban main roads with many traffic lights and major road crossings between the lights to be negotiated. All running must be on the footpath or shared cycle/walking paths in the parklands. All traffic lights must be obeyed as you would on a normal training run (ie use common sense). To facilitate this requirement while bearing in mind that people are competitive, the recognised time taken for all participants will be "moving time" only. Therefore no-one is disadvantaged by traffic light or toilet stops.

Then there are considerations for drinks and fatigue. No dedicated aid stations will be provided but I will be going over the course a few times to determine where there are suitable drinking taps. Most people are used to carrying their own water these days. There will be plenty of shops along the course as well. I will also be noting where the toilets are and if necessary negotiating with any suitable service stations.

As this is a marathon run in unusual circumstances, those being a Friday afternoon on busy roads and footpaths with many lights to negotiate in the last stages, I strongly recommend that all participants arrange for someone to accompany them over the final 10 km. Fortunately one of the major road crossings near the end (Park Tce) now has a light controlled pedestrian crossing which must have been installed since I last ran over that part of the course.

The only major variation to the course for safety reasons is to the finish which will NOT be on University Oval but on the adjacent Graduates Oval inside the Uni Loop. This eliminates the need to get across Frome Road on a busy Friday afternoon when you have less than a kilometre to run. I'm hoping to have the clubrooms at Graduates Oval open for our use.

Starting times

The event starts in Victoria Square. In order to have everyone finishing within a ninety-minute window from 3:30pm the start time will vary from 11am to 1pm, with the slower runners beginning at 11am. I expect to have a helper at the start during that time to get everyone ready to go. In order to keep group size to a minimum people can start when they like. The event will be self-timed only. If anyone wishes to walk the marathon they may need to start earlier than 11am.

The next notice will have more details. If anyone wishes to contact me or wants my mobile number they can reach me, Ian Hill, at hillij (at) hotmail (dot) com.

Who is that man?



Hugh Wolter was the first South Australian State marathon champion in 1920 when he finished second to Percy Collins of Victoria in a time of 3:44:40. Collins' time was 3:18:23. The only other finisher from seven entrants and six starters was Thomas Byrnes from Queensland in 4:28:20.

Wolter, aged 36, ran for the South Australian Walking and Field Games Club while Collins was with Carlton Harriers and Byrnes with Boonah Harriers in Brisbane.

The photo of Wolter was taken three years later when he won a "modified" marathon of 15 miles on Saturday, 8 September 1923 from a field of 15 entrants. He then represented the YMCA. He was born at Knightsbridge on 4 May 1884 and started school at Broken Hill and later moved to Mount Pleasant before living with his parents in Adelaide at age 11.

Photo: The Register, September 1923.