

# THE SPARTAN

**CLUB PATRON - Robert de Castella**

**November 2021**

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## **FROM THE PRESIDENT**     **Jay Fleming (S1012)**

Dear Spartans

It's certainly fantastic to be coming out the other side of all this ... yet again! No need to clarify what 'all this' means as we're all still trying to figure out what just happened and who pressed the fast-forward button on the last couple of years of our life. We're also super happy and super relieved to have our beloved event back again as up until mid-September it was looking suspiciously likely that the 2021 Melbourne Marathon would be cancelled like 2020. So, it is indeed fortunate that all Spartans and aspiring Spartans can once again add to our completed Melbourne Marathon totals, which we couldn't do with last year's virtual event even if we ran the distance solo somewhere in our suburbs. This year's event is going to be a little different due to the tail end of the COVID-safe planning. In the interests of responsible risk management, organisers have opted to minimise enclosed spaces and population density, so we have no 3-day Expo leading up to the event and no post-race Spartan Tent experience as there are no tents.

About 3 weeks ago IMG announced the Government mandate (not IMG's mandate) that all entrants would need to provide proof of their double-vaccinated status to be permitted to participate in the event. This also applies to volunteers at the start and finish lines and on the course itself including at the drink stations. Similar to other sectors in society, in running circles, this mandate have caused controversy and bitter disappointment for a significant number of Spartans. Without wishing to court controversy of right and wrong on the topic itself as these are deeply polarising views, in my capacity as President I just wanted to express my empathy and compassion to Spartans who will not be participating in the 2021 Melbourne Marathon due to their deeply-held and thoroughly-researched convictions on the vaccine mandate. We value and respect the achievements of all Spartans, and similar to mainstream society, we may not always respect or agree with each other's differing views, but we respect each other's RIGHT to our differing views. In some notable cases, we have Spartans in the Hall of Fame who will be missing this event for the very first time in over 30 years. Their bitterness has been further exacerbated by the fact that they've put in the training, only to be told they're ineligible six weeks out from the event. We're thinking of you guys and we hope to see you back in the event soon!

It has been very pleasing to have IMG assist us with our request to provide Spartans with at least some small measure of specialness for crossing the finish line in a Spartan singlet, in a year without a Spartan Tent. We asked for and have been granted a 'Spartan photo opportunity podium' on the MCG playing surface itself, just to the right after crossing the official Finish Line on the boundary, just before we start trudging down the tunnel where our quads and hammies start talking to us! We will finalise what this photo podium will look like at this Monday's Committee Meeting but at this stage, even though we are not officially required to have it manned, we intend to have a volunteer in the vicinity, not just to share the finishing glow with Spartans but also to take pics if required and to keep exhausted runners from congregating/resting for long periods and blocking access. There will be no official photographer as it will be a self-serve, take-your-own-pics podium due to everyone owning a phone these days, but there will be someone to take a pic if requested. We wish to conduct ourselves in a responsible, appropriate and safe manner with this privilege granted to us as my wish would it be that it becomes a permanent fixture going forward even when Expos and Tents return. I personally think it's a fantastic way to get the Spartan Running Man logo on centre stage in a highly visible piece of real estate where every finisher has to walk past it after crossing the Finish Line. It's a great incentive for aspiring Spartans crossing the line in extreme pain and thinking 'never again!' to come back next year and the year after and ... until they get to the green singlet and then walk with pride after their tenth to that podium to have their family or significant others take a pic of them at that very same Spartan Podium they've walked past over the years aspiring to become a Spartan.

We are yet to finalise details, but we are currently looking into the possibility of arranging an after-race Spartans function at a nearby watering hole. This will be confirmed by email a little closer to the event once the hospitality sector has had a chance to get rolling again and we have a better picture of individual venues and their eased restrictions on numbers and population density. COVID has certainly erased the word 'normal' and now here we are about to turn the corner into December and preparing for a marathon two weeks out from Christmas! What's the betting there'll be at least one runner running the event in a Santa suit?

## **SPARTANS AND ADELAIDE WARRIORS**

Ian Hill's third article on the Adelaide Marathon uncovers the 15 Spartans who have also completed at least ten Adelaides. It includes in depth interviews as well as statistical analysis.

Due to length and formatting issues, this article has been put into a [separate document](#) rather than including it in this newsletter. Please ignore any warning message – it is a trustworthy document!

**2020 2021 SPARTAN Hamish Blair (Incoming)**

On December 12<sup>th</sup> it will be so great to be hitting the streets with everyone for the long overdue return of the Melbourne Marathon. But I am also one the runners, who if I make it to the finish line inside the MCG, will have completed a 10th Melbourne Marathon and have officially earned the green singlet I will be proudly wearing on the day! My first was 2011 and I have run every one since, meaning I was left stranded on nine after 2019 and have (im)patiently waited a couple of years to get the chance to run number ten. If anything the last couple of years has taught us, it is to put things into perspective and if waiting an extra year to become a Spartan is something that has been occupying my mind, then things can't be all that bad!

Running was something I discovered as an adult; in my younger years most of my sporting pursuits were team sports. My work as a photographer led to a fair bit of travel, which wasn't great for committing to a team and it was then that I really found running. The simple practicalities of only needing a pair of runners, shorts and t-shirt appealed initially as an activity that could travel with me, but all the other joys of running soon had me hooked!



I spent a few years living in London and had the opportunity to photograph the London Marathon, which inspired me to aim for longer distances. I think it was the day after that marathon, I went out and ran about 20km, which was first for me and a lot further than I'd ever run. Not surprisingly, this led to another first, my first running injury, as my knee protested this sudden increase in distance! After recovering I entered my first half marathon and as I struggled through the last kilometre, I

decided I was never running a marathon, there was no way I could do that twice! But less than an hour after finishing, I was all turned around and planning my first marathon attempt!

Every year in London, I entered the ballot for a chance to run the London Marathon and every year I missed out. After a few years, I returned home to Melbourne and a few months later received the inevitable email telling me I had a spot in the next year's event! I did consider going back, but given I was now again living in beautiful Melbourne, it seemed far more appropriate to make my marathon debut with the Melbourne event.

2011 was my first, I loved the experience. I did, what is all too common, getting way too excited and going too hard at the start and inevitably paying the price in the last 10km! Even so, before I finished, I knew this wasn't about ticking the "run a marathon" box as a

one off achievement, marathon running was going to be a major part of the rest of my life, I was hooked!

A long term goal of running ten Melbourne Marathons and becoming a Spartan was



something I started thinking about as soon as I had run one. However in 2016, while photographing a job promoting the work of the Spartans with a young man, Tate Kemp, who had been made an Honorary Spartan, I met David Foskey and several other members of this fantastic organisation. Seeing their passion for not only the marathon, but the running community, made me all the more determined to one day become a member.

In the last ten years, my priorities with work, family and life in general have meant that I haven't always had as much time for running every year as I would have liked, but running the marathon has always been something that I have prioritised. My marathon times have, not surprisingly, fluctuated with the amount of time I have managed to put into my running each year.

Up until a few years ago, running was something I did almost exclusively by myself. But a recommitment to fitness in general, led me to meeting and joining a local group of runners. This has been an amazing revelation to me, mostly because now instead of boring my wife to tears with talk of running, I have a group of like-minded running nerds, who are actually interested in spending hours discussing the benefits of a particular pair of shoes or how effective one interval session is compared to another!

Since the 2019 Melbourne Marathon I have, when the various lockdowns and restrictions allowed, tried a few different events, taking on some trail and ultra runs. A few highlights have been the MVP Backyard Ultra at Brimbank Park, Two Bays 56km on the Mornington Peninsula and this May getting up to the Blue Mountains to run the Ultra-Trail Australia 100km (See selfie previous page). There have been quite a few inevitable cancellations in that time as well, but I feel pretty lucky to have been able to join like-minded runners doing what we love and particularly given how quickly things changed this year, it seems quite amazing to have been in NSW as recently as May taking part in an event!

I think that will make this year's Melbourne Marathon all the more special, the last couple of years have made us appreciate things we do together even more. I don't think anyone ever takes marathon running for granted, but there really will be something extra special about being out there again on the 12<sup>th</sup>!

## **MEMORIES OF A SPARTAN AND A WARRIOR** Euan Downing (S0887)

I was to run my 25<sup>th</sup> Adelaide Marathon so I would become a SARRC Legend but in training my body ran out of energy after about 20kms. It was hard to explain to a doctor that I had any physical problems. Mental maybe! I ended up on chemo instead of running the marathon.



I now look back and remember what enjoyment running put into my life. Making many running friends, going on training camps like to Thredbo or running sections of the Heysen trail through fantastic scenery with other fit people. I would not have been able to do this without the incentive to stay fit so I could run in both the Melbourne and Adelaide marathons. Melbourne was always a challenge as my hottest, coldest and wettest marathons were all in Melbourne. Not only was it a challenge to finish a marathon in a reasonable time it was interesting to talk to fellow runners and learn why they were

running and what problems they had to overcome to run the distance. One example was a lady I caught up with during the 2008 Melbourne marathon who started the run in a bear costume. During the 10kms or so we ran together she told me she was running the marathon to raise attention of the cruelty being done to bears in some Asian countries. I do not know anything else about her but she had a great character and put some fun into the run. Above is a photo of the young lady after she had taken off the bear costume but left the head section in place. I understand she finished the marathon.

Now at 84 years of age I struggle to walk 3 to 5 kms but remember with pleasure when I would go to Melbourne for a weekend just for the fun of running a Melbourne Marathon.

May the Spartan Club and the Melbourne Marathon survive the Covid restrictions.

*Editor's note. Euan ran 12 Melbourne and 24 Adelaide marathons. With a little detective work, I determined that the "bear lady" was Janet Seccull running her only marathon. She is a top level equestrian who is delighted to have a copy of the above photograph on her wall.*

*This article grew out of [Ian Hill's piece](#) on Spartans who have also completed at least ten Adelaide marathons to become Warriors.*

**RECIPES** Felicity Doolan SF0080

Smoked Salmon & Parmesan Gluten Free hors d'oeuvres

**Ingredients:**

1 packet grated parmesan cheese  
1 packet sliced smoked salmon  
Sour Cream or Greek Yoghurt  
Fresh Chives



**Method:**

Preheat the Oven to 180 degrees Celsius.

Take two oven trays and place baking paper on each.

Place a teaspoon of grated parmesan cheese spaced about 2 cms apart from each other.

Bake in the Oven for 7-10 minutes. Note as long as they are melted together they are ready, do not burn them!

Take out of the oven and let cool completely. You now have parmesan crisps.

Once cool, lift off paper and place onto a serving tray.

On each "parmesan crisp" place a 2-3 cm piece of sliced smoked salmon. Be very casual – it can "pile up".

Then place a teaspoon "dollop" of Sour Cream or Greek yoghurt. Both work well with this recipe.

Decorate with chives. (Please note this photo has dill as that is all I had!)

Happy Festivus!

*Felicity thinks that this recipe might have originated with Jenny Eason SF0088*

## **WOULD YOU LIKE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE NEWSLETTER? David Foskey**

Do you have a story about your path to becoming a Spartan, or would you like to pay a tribute? We prefer articles in the range of 200 to 2000 words, but that's a guide only. Contact us to discuss at [djfoskey@ozemail.com.au](mailto:djfoskey@ozemail.com.au) If you have missed a deadline, don't worry, there is always the next issue!

If you have some photographs that you would like to add to our [photographs collection](#), please send them in!

## **MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL NOW BEING ACCEPTED FOR 2021/2022**

The Spartan financial year is 1 July to 30 June, so fees for 2021/2022 are now being accepted. Can't remember if you have paid for 2021/22? Look up your name via this link: <http://melbournemarathonspartans.com/financial-spartans/>. If you are not there you haven't paid so here's how:

<b>\$20 via EFT:</b>  Melbourne Marathon Spartans Club BSB: 633-000 Account No: 139201743  Please include name and/or Spartan Number	<b>Cheque for \$20 via Post:</b>  "Melbourne Marathon Spartans Club" PO Box 162 Rosanna Vic 3084  Please include name and/or Spartan Number
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If you are a current member, you do not need to fill in a Membership Form\* but please advise of any changes to your contact details via [spartans.team@hotmail.com](mailto:spartans.team@hotmail.com). OR\*: download the [membership form](#) and email or post it in.

## **JOIN OUR MAILING LIST**

If you would like to be added to our mailing list or if you know someone who might like to join, [please use this link](#)

We have lost contact with many of our older members. For instance, of the 15 Spartans who are Warriors, we only had three valid email addresses. If you know a Spartan who doesn't receive our emails and is on email, please encourage them to use the above link. We deliberately limit the number of emails we send, and all have an unsubscribe link.

## SPARTAN MERCHANDISE



Helen van der Nagel (SF0043) is shown at left wearing the new 10 year T-shirt. [Check out the other options](#) available, including a generic training shirt.

Our caps, mugs, stickers are described [here](#).

We have some copies of Doug Wilson's book "Kundalini Running" available for \$20. Contact Jay Fleming at [flemingjay2@gmail.com](mailto:flemingjay2@gmail.com).

We still have copies available of "[The Wall](#)" at the bargain price of \$10.



We now have clips that can be used to secure race numbers to race tops. They have been adopted by many clubs here and overseas, and look as if they were designed for our logo. The selling price is \$5 plus postage.

We don't have a confirmed supplier of club jackets at the moment.

## **SPARTANS' CLUB STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

To advance the sport of marathon running to athletes of all ages and abilities and to encourage and assist all runners to achieve Melbourne Marathon Spartan status.

To provide a platform and environment for runners to receive and to build upon their achievements enabling progression through the various Spartan milestone singlet colours.

Assist in the promotion and publicity of the Melbourne Marathon and the charities it supports.

## **BENEFITS OF BEING A SPARTAN**

The Melbourne Marathon Spartans Club is a club consisting of marathon runners from all walks of life, ages and abilities that have achieved Spartan status by having run ten Melbourne Marathons.

The benefits of membership include regular newsletters, organised training runs, being presented with a Spartan singlet after ten years and subsequent milestone Spartan singlets each five years, the opportunity to attend our AGM and hear a top-line guest speaker.

In normal years we have a tent where bags can be stored securely. After run refreshments and free massages are provided as well as the opportunity to rest and chat.

### Life Members

Paul Basile, Peter Battrick, Rod Bayley, John Dean, John Dobson, Peter Feldman, Jay Fleming, David Foskey, Jack Fredrickson, Christine Hodges, Ken Matchett (Dec'd), Conor McNeice, John Raskas, Peter Ryan, Colin Silcock-Delaney, Maureen Wilson, Ron Young (Dec'd), Shirley Young (Dec'd)

### COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE		
<b>President</b>	Jay Fleming	0418 374 783
<b>Vice President</b>	Paul Basile	0439 718 281
<b>Treasurer</b>	Rod Bayley	9077 7192
<b>Secretary</b>	Anne Ziogos	9592 4481
<b>Webmaster</b>	David Foskey	0432 146 747
<b>Committee</b>	John Dobson	0412 688 287
<b>Committee</b>	John Kaparelis	0447 447 448
<b>Committee</b>	Colin Silcock-Delaney	
<b>Committee</b>	Felicity Doolan	
<b>Committee</b>	Vicky Chung	
<b>Committee</b>	Kai Ooi	
<b>Committee</b>	John Zeleznikow	