



Melbourne Marathon Spartans Club Inc.
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Held on Monday 15 September 2025

7.30pm-9.00pm, AFL Dining Room, Melbourne Cricket Ground

Meeting Opened: 7.30pm

In Attendance: President/People & Culture Secretary: Jay Fleming, **Vice President:** Paul Basile
Treasurer: Vicky Chung, **Membership Secretary:** Felicity Doolan, **Committee Members:** David Foskey, Candida Baskcomb, Peter Seal, John Zeleznikow, Gavin Criddle, John Kaparelis

Apologies: Peter Anagnostakis, Kester Baines, Simon Blyth, Sally Buckingham, Hung Mui Chiu, Deb Christie, Nick Clare, Jody Daff, Robert De Castella, Dion Finocchiaro, Bryan Flegg, Peter Fuller, Kirsty Gwynn-Jones, Chas Harcoan, Phillip Healey, Jane Hemmings, Christine Hodges, James Huckson, Stephen Humphrys, Daniel Le Roy, John Lindsay, Lee Meakin, Andrew Mott, Frank Palermo, Brad Palmer, Greg Payne, Paul Pouniotis, David Sagar, Paul Shekleton, Trevor Smith, Jane Sturzaker, Neil Styles, Michelle Tham, Doug Wallace, Peter Wheeldon, Clarke Whitehand, Alex Whitworth, Con Zanetidis, Anne Ziogos

Minute Secretary: Pamela Young

Item	Topic & Discussion
1	Welcome
	<p>President, Jay Fleming, declared the meeting open at 7.30pm and welcomed all Spartans, family members and friends to the MCG for this special evening at Australia's home of sport. Jay spoke about what a privilege it has been for him to be President for just over a decade and a half. He also spoke about the personal challenges Spartans face throughout the course of any year, and how running connects us all. Jay spoke of the advantages gifted to him through his Spartan experience and involvement in the Committee, being a part of a united tribe and the House of Pain as mentioned in his written report, a place many in the room have been.</p> <p>Jay extended a warm welcome to Guest Speaker, Spartan, Ian Gainey (SW1), and Spartan royalty: John Dobson, David Foskey and Wayne Thompson.</p> <p>Jay asked all incoming Spartans to stand and be acknowledged, followed by milestone singlet recipients for 15, 20, 35 and 45 year singlets, and all members who have run and are still running the years in between the five year incremental structure, including runners who have run 40-44 Melbourne Marathons, he also asked the Legends to stand.</p> <p>Jay told our incoming Spartans that they will be joining an elite group of runners, although the Club is not elitist. Only one percent of Melbourne Marathon runners continue running Melbourne, and get to wear the green singlet. He told everyone to be proud of their Spartan achievements.</p> <p>The RSVPs for the AGM have grown, which is an example of our success. The Club has firm foundations built by past President John Dean and Legend David Foskey who have done a power of work documenting and ensuring the Club has its history preserved. Four decades of recording is important. The Club has a history of its own thanks to them. Spartans are a broad church and the logo is now known all around Australia. Jay encouraged all in attendance to visit the website for information, join the Club runs and read members stories in the newsletter.</p> <p>The Minutes of the 2024 AGM have been on the website for 12 months. Jay gave a precis of them and spoke briefly to the main points. Jay spoke recent years past, and how running survived the pandemic and how recreational running and the Melbourne Marathon has grown exponentially post pandemic. He also advised many improvements from the Club's point of view including the Spartan podium at the finish line for photographs, and the help and support provided by IMG and Marcus Gale specifically. We have worked closely with IMG to get Spartans guaranteed entry to the Melbourne Marathon for the foreseeable future.</p>
2	Apologies
	Minute Secretary, Pamela Young, read out the apologies which are recorded above. Apologies were accepted.

10	Presentation of Awards
	<p>The following awards were introduced by Jay and presented as follows:</p> <p>Shirley Young Award - First Female Spartan in 2024 – Andrea Lung (SF154) – Net Time: 3:14:09. Presentation by Life Member Peter Battrick (S5). Andrea Lung accepted her trophy.</p> <p>Jack Gubbins Award - First Male Spartan in 2024 – Dion Finocchiaro (S1476) – Net Time: 2:23:44. Dion is an apology tonight. He will accept his trophy at the Expo or the Spartans Tent. Presentation by Life Member Peter Battrick (S5)</p> <p>Jay explained the importance and significance of the Hall of Fame concept. It was put forward by past President Peter Ryan and John Dean embraced the idea, and since then it has become tradition.</p> <p>Hall of Fame Award Induction – Mark Foley (S979). Presentation by Peter Ryan (S69)</p> <p>Peter spoke about the Committee and thanked them for their work. He mentioned the Supermen of Spartans, our three Legends. Peter also spoke about the importance of the marathon and the formative years. He expressed the view that the success of the Melbourne Marathon today is because of the Spartans and our rich history. The Hall of Fame is another award to keep us running on that one day in October.</p> <p>They are our highest achievers. There are now 54 members in the Hall of Fame. These runners represent only three percent of the Club membership. Mark Foley accepted his certificate.</p> <p>Ian Twite (S1000) was unable to attend, and his certificate will be presented at another time.</p>
	<p>Life Membership Award - Presentation by Legend David Foskey (S25).</p> <p>Jay invited David to the stage to present the award. David spoke about this being the highest award a Spartan can receive. Life Membership is awarded for outstanding service to the Club.</p> <p>John Kaparelis (S749) has been a committee member for 11 years. One of his first initiatives was to purchase advertising. He has stored Spartan archival information at his home, including stock take reports. In recent years he has been involved in liaising with the MCG; has run a plethora of marathons and has been committed to advancing the sport of running for athletes of varying abilities. In addition, he has supported CPEC and most recently has been organising and encouraging runners to be pacers for smaller marathons. John is persuasive, persistent, and supportive in every way of the Club and running as a sport; he has taken the running man logo into the wider running space. This Life Membership Award is acknowledgement of his dedication and efforts.</p> <p>The room unanimously agreed to John receiving a Life Membership Award. John accepted the Award to much applause.</p> <p>Jay spoke to the Pheidippides Award, and advised that Alex Whitworth (S882) was pleased to accept the award, making him the inaugural recipient. Alex was unable to be at the AGM, but will receive his award at the Spartans tent on race day.</p> <p>Vale: Helen Bayley the wife of former Treasurer, Rod Bayley was warmly remembered. Jay spoke about the huge contribution Helen had made to the club for at least a decade, by assisting Rod, and as the Singlet Queen, organising singlets for many of the Spartans in attendance tonight, amongst many other tasks. The MMSC acknowledges her for her outstanding service to us all. She is sadly missed and there will never be another Singlet Queen. In addition, Helen was an avid Collingwood supporter and we will not forget her efforts, or the person that she was.</p> <p>Legends, Wayne Thompson and John Dobson were invited to speak about their prostate cancer journey. Their sage message was to the men in the audience, to please get tested. The disease does not only affect older men. It affects young men also. Both kept running, despite the diagnosis and treatment.</p>
15 Minute Break – The meeting broke and all members enjoyed refreshments	
11	Guest Speaker – Ian Gainey (SW1)
	<p>Jay introduced Ian and gave some background. Ian and Jay had made a pact, the other side of COVID, that they would be inducted together into the Hall of Fame after completing 30 Melbourne Marathons, which they both succeeded in doing. Jay advised the room that Ian’s journey was a Masterclass in strength and resilience.</p> <p>Ian thanked Jay and Committee, and welcomed everyone to the meeting. Ian spoke about the anatomy of feet, the ligaments and bones and the many components that make up a foot. He asked everyone to stand, so they could consider the importance of their feet. This highlighted the cause of Ian being a wheelchair marathoner, which was contracting Poliomyelitis as a small child. Ian then told story and how he managed the effects of Polio, on his body and his family. He spoke of his career and a long life of work and movement, through endurance event participation, which has taken him overseas to compete in Paralympics and many other events.</p>

	<p>Ian spoke about his parents who sold their family farm and thanked the Department of Health who treated him and provided him with calipers and a prosthetic leg. He spoke about his many competitions and successes over many years including a unique event in Japan which is a marathon where no able bodied runners are allowed. There is nothing like it in the world and Ian has competed many times, including in the half marathon. Ian finished 5th in the world at the Seoul Paralympics, and he has had the good fortune to meet many celebrities through his prolific involvement in competitions including Paralympics, and he has also had the honour of carrying the Olympic torch in Australia.</p> <p>Ian's achievements are remarkable, and the audience appreciated him sharing his story of resilience, endurance and getting on with living life despite adversity. Ian said that he has trained hard; he has participated and he is proud of himself. Questions were asked from the floor and Ian generously responded. Jay mentioned a book Ian is writing called <i>No Painey No Gainey</i>, which delighted the Spartans. Vice President, Paul Basile, thanked Ian for being the Guest Speaker and for sharing his story and presented him with a thank you gift.</p>
12	Presentation of Spartan Singlets by Ian Gainey
	<p>Felicity Doolan (S80) announced the Incoming and Milestone Singlet recipients. Singlets were presented to 10, 15, 20, 35, and 45-year runners by Ian Gainey. Felicity introduced every incoming Spartan with a personal fun fact about each recipient.</p> <p>To run over 10 marathons is not an easy task and Jay congratulated the incoming Spartans for 'keeping on keeping on.' He spoke of the effort and commitment to get to this point. Jay asked recipients to gather so they could walk the 10 metre green turf up to the podium as Felicity announced their name and their achievement. He advised them 'This is your moment, and we want it to be special'. Jay shook everyone's hand.</p> <p>Recipients walked the green carpet and had their photograph taken with Ian, by Hamish Blair (S1423), a professional sport photographer. At the end of the presentations, Jay extended a special welcome to incoming Spartans and told them to enjoy wearing their green singlet on race day and the compliments and encouragement they will receive from other runners, who aspire to becoming Spartans.</p> <p>Felicity spoke about our inclusive community and how we are all different but we are all Spartans, and the importance and the hard work associated with that feat.</p> <p>Jay congratulated Spartans new and old and thanked everyone for their attendance.</p> <p><i>Once a Spartan, always a Spartan.</i></p>
13	Raffle Draw
	Raffle tickets were drawn with a selection of prizes for the winners.
14	Meeting Closed at 10.10pm

PRESIDENT'S REPORT – Jay Fleming (S1012)

On behalf of the Melbourne Marathon Spartans Club Committee, it's a pleasure to welcome you to our 2025 Annual General Meeting! The Committee and I warmly welcome all incoming Spartans to the Spartan Tribe this evening! We also extend our heartfelt congratulations to Spartans progressing to their next singlet colour. Congratulations to you all and may your new colours bring you much personal pride and immense satisfaction every time you wear the singlet.

The Melbourne Marathon was first run in 1978, and as we approach the 50th anniversary, we are excitedly looking forward to planning some significant events for the milestone year. Our committee has continued the excellent efforts of all previous Committees by being proud custodians of Spartan history for the generations of Spartans that will succeed us. We look forward to some exciting initiatives to showcase the accumulated history of both the Melbourne Marathon and the Spartans Club, which was first conceived in 1988, following the running of the 10th Melbourne Marathon the year before.

Any group or network of people in any field of endeavour works best when united by a passionate bond of pure and authentic motivation that maintains its momentum over time ... and the strength of that bond determines the strength and longevity of the group. As Spartans, our Running Man logo is universally recognised on the running landscape. We have fought hard to maintain the value of the brand by ensuring the qualifying criteria are strictly adhered to, which sometimes has not won us friends. While we have always strived to ensure respectful and professional interactions with runners at all times, this has not automatically

meant that all claims and enquiries have gone as runners had intended, which sometimes hasn't gone well. However, we have not been prepared to sacrifice the integrity and sweat equity of the Spartan singlet, just to be liked. As a representative body, it is crucial to us that people trust the process ... meaning that any runner seeing another runner wearing a Spartan singlet in any event, can have the utmost confidence that the runner has fully earned the right to do so.

There is an innate camaraderie among Spartans in the Melbourne Marathon itself and also Spartans participating in other events interstate or globally. There are no shortcuts to becoming a Spartan, and no amount of advertising or promotion to increase the number of club members will change the fact that it takes a minimum of ten years to achieve the green singlet. This is why we have gone to such great lengths over the years ... and continue to go to great lengths to make people feel special on the night as each incoming recipient's award has been ten years in the making.

We have extended this feeling of specialness for Spartans by initiating the Spartans Photo Podium at the Finish Line, and we continue to liaise with event organisers to extend this feeling of specialness for Spartans to several sections of the course itself on the day of the event. In addition to the bond between Spartans, there is also a strong bond between Spartans and their significant others ... which tends to be at its most profound following a Spartan's passing. On several occasions, I have personally witnessed the closeness and calming effect in sons, daughters and partners of marathoners ... who have entered marathons after their Spartan's passing. I have been honoured to attend celebrations of life for dearly departed Spartans to say a few words in my capacity as President. Even though I may not have known the departed Spartan well, and in some cases never met them at all personally ... I actually have met them ... I have met them in the various rooms of the house of pain. All marathon runners are roommates in the share-house of pain. Any runners who have spent time in the various rooms of the house of pain ... feel a palpable closeness while experiencing similar levels of extreme pain and facial grimace but still persisting with robotic steps and deteriorated technique despite all body parts screaming at us to stop. To be in that same house of pain is to know the person, to be close to them ... literally within touching distance even after they have passed decades ago. It is a wonderful way to not only honour and pay homage to the person, but also to be in the same 'room' with them.

Such was the case during a recent celebration of life I attended, to celebrate the life of Maxim Wood (S0087). The family emailed us of Dad's passing, and I felt honoured to attend the celebration of Maxim's life on the Portsea foreshore for the ashes ceremony, followed by reflections at the Portsea Golf Club. Maxim's last Melbourne Marathon was in 2002 and at the time he had completed all 25 Melbourne Marathons, proudly wearing the 'Gold Spartan' singlet, which was replaced by the term 'Legend' a decade later to distinguish runners who had completed every Melbourne Marathon. Although never having met in person, Maxim and I ... and many Spartans in this room this evening ... ran in many of the same Melbourne Marathons, ten of them in the 1990's in my case ... probably rubbed shoulders along the way or at drinks stations and felt similar pain levels in all those events. I was extremely overcome with grief speaking at a commemoration event of a runner I'd never spoken a word to and yet felt so connected to.

Through our Webmaster, Spartan Legend David Foskey, we continue to store on the Spartans website, the rich tapestry and personal journeys of Spartans who write to us or families who write to us on behalf of Spartans. As mentioned at last year's AGM and in subsequent Newsletters, we are making a small yet significant change to our Awards process. We are moving to broaden the recognition of Spartans who have 'performed at their best' by introducing the Pheidippides Award to runners with the net time closest to the cutoff time, which from this year will be 7.5 hours. At past AGM's, we have deservedly awarded the fastest male and fastest female Spartans trophies to runners who have 'performed at their best'.

Going forward, we will also be recognising Spartans who have registered the net time closest to the 7-hour, 30-minute cutoff limit, as unsurprisingly, I strongly believe these runners have also 'performed at their best'. No runner stands at the start line of any marathon anywhere in the world, and somehow contemplates putting in a horrendously poor effort in that event ... or is somehow plotting to run a really sub-par, mediocre version of their genuine effort level on that day. Stuff may certainly happen during the event and things may not go as planned, but every runner still performs at their very best ... and please correct me if I'm wrong ... but ... nobody can do better than their best! During this 2025 AGM, we are proud to be awarding the inaugural Pheidippides Award, which has been proudly accepted by **Alex Whitworth** (S882).

Once again Spartans, welcome to the AGM and I hope you have a wonderful evening! Welcome to SpartaNation!!! *Perfectionism is just fear in fancy shoes and a mink coat* – **Elizabeth Gilbert**

TREASURER'S REPORT - Vicky Chung (SF133)**Financial Statement 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025****Profit and Loss**

For the year ended 30 June 2025

Income	\$
AGM Income	60.00
Donation Income	1,315.88
Interest Income	200.54
Membership Fees Income	13,667.09
Merchandise Income	9,123.34
Milestone Singlets Income	4,400.00
Postage Income	558.00
Total Income	29,324.85
Expenses	
AGM Expenses	6,102.59
Marathon Race Day Expenses	2,212.64
Merchandise Expenses	13,478.45
Miscellaneous Expenses	92.80
Office & Stationery Expenses	534.64
Postage & Freight Expenses	602.03
Singlets Expenses	3,440.80
Square Processing Fees	343.56
Subscriptions	230.00
Website & Computer Software Expenses	63.65
Total Expenses	27,101.16
Net Profit	2,223.69

Balance Sheet

As at 30 June 2025

Assets	\$
Bank	
Melbourne Marathon Spartans Club Inc	8,722.66
Melbourne Marathon Spartans Club Inc (Term Deposit)	15,000.00
Total Bank	23,722.66
Current Assets	
Prepayments	1,311.00
Total Current Assets	1,311.00
Total Assets	25,033.66
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	62.70
Membership Fees in Advance	2,380.00
Total Current Liabilities	2,442.70
Non-current Liabilities	
Membership Fees in Advance 2026-27	40.00
Membership Fees in Advance 2027-28	40.00
Total Non-current Liabilities	80.00
Total Liabilities	2,522.70

Net Assets	22,510.96
Equity	
Current Year Earnings	2,223.69
Retained Earnings	20,287.27
Total Equity	22,510.96
Membership 2024/25	364

SECRETARY'S REPORT - Pamela Young (SF93)

The year from the point of view of the Melbourne Marathon Spartans Club Committee, has been one filled with meetings, discussions, ideas, the monthly Spartan runs and action to try to improve what we can provide for members, and to raise the profile of the Spartan brand. It has also been a year rich with Spartan stories about running challenges, accomplishments, adventures and some health issues and injuries. There are other stories too, of celebrations, children, grandchildren, travel, and discussions about global issues.

Most of us are juggling timeframes, we have full time jobs, family commitments, a dedication to recreational running, and marathon training to manage. Even with the best laid plans sometimes life throws us something unexpected, and we are redirected and suddenly on a journey we did not want and perhaps do not welcome. Tonight, we will hear such a story, and about how participating in endurance events can strengthen us both physically and mentally, and how that strength has the power to not only assist us in overcoming adversity but can make us thrive in all areas of life.

Success in running though, does not always mean running fast, or improving a PB, it is about turning up and giving it your best shot. Every Spartan in the room tonight, shares one common denominator: successfully running and completing a minimum of ten Melbourne Marathons. We know that finding common ground in friendships is essential for building healthy and lasting relationships. Our shared interest and achievement is why we are here at the MCG again. It is a special connection, perhaps an unusual connection, but it is something that we have all aspired to and worked hard to achieve.

Our current total membership is 1792 with the breakdown of membership as follows: Male Spartans - 1585, Female Spartans - 201, Wheelchair Spartans - 2, Honorary Spartans - 4. We celebrate the Spartan spirit, epitomised by our inspiring Spartan Legends, **John Dobson** (S21), **David Foskey** (S25) and **Wayne Thompson** (S78), who are lining up for their 47th MM on Sunday 12 October, and our broad and inclusive membership base.

Becoming a Spartan is a huge achievement, and our many incoming Spartans, will no doubt feel the gravitas and joy inherent in the title when they run across the finish line wearing their green singlet. A recent Instagram post resonated and sums up the experience of many runners; the following is an extract:

Running isn't about being invincible.

It's about showing up knowing you're not.

It's about feeling your heartbeat in your ears and realising how delicate life is.

It's about the stumbles, the quiet pain, the sudden reminder that your body can only do so much and that's okay.

It's about choosing to move anyway. Because the most powerful moments don't always happen when we're crushing kilometres, they happen when we're barely hanging on... but we keep going.

So today, whether you ran fast, slow, or not at all remember this:

Your effort is not defined by perfection.

It's defined by presence.

I am proud to be a member of this club and committee which has the best interests of Spartans at the forefront of everything we do. Enjoy this shared experience, the energy in the room, and being present.