

# THE SPARTAN

Reg No A0043579R

CLUB PATRON - Robert de Castella

July, 2015

**Email:** [spartans.team@hotmail.com](mailto:spartans.team@hotmail.com)**Website:** [www.melbournemarathonspartans.com](http://www.melbournemarathonspartans.com)**Postal:** P.O. Box 162., Rosanna Vic 3084

## ***Notice of Annual General Meeting***

**Monday, 14 September 2015 at 7.30 pm  
to be held in the  
Harrison Room at the Melbourne Cricket Ground ("MCG")**

***Guest Speaker: Lavinia Petrie***

### **FROM THE PRESIDENT**

Hi Spartans,

Welcome to our BRRRRR.... July newsletter. The weather has been bracing and the morning chills in the hills of Upper Ferntree Gully certainly make one feel alive.

It was great to do a couple of laps, light brekky and good strong coffee with fellow Spartans on the Hall of Fame Run at The Tan earlier this month. Among the terrific number that turned out for the lively catch-up, I would like to acknowledge Ray Cilia and Ken Bolitho who travelled by train from an even chillier Shepparton for the event.

I would like to share with Spartans some possible exciting news for next year's running calendar. Many Spartans regularly participate in the Great Ocean Road Marathon and as you may be aware, IMG took the event over last year. Although not yet confirmed, it looks highly likely that for the first time, there will be a 60km option at next year's event. If it does eventuate, it promises to be an exciting drawcard on the annual running calendar due to its world-class scenery. We will keep you updated on this exciting development as it unfolds.

Regarding the expansion of our Spartans merchandise range, we are progressing with our 'Spartans Cap' option and will have further details soon.

As announced in the last newsletter, Jane Sturzaker and Helen Van Der Nagel will be jetting off to Japan in October as winners of our Teganuma Marathon prize draw. I have been contacted by the 'homestay accommodation' host family from Japan recently to confirm that they will run a similar competition over there for a runner to participate in the 2016 Melbourne Marathon. We have offered our home for the 'homestay accommodation' and very much look forward to the cultural exchange. If any Spartans would like to be considered for a similar privilege of sharing your home with an overseas runner in future competitions, just drop us a line for further details.

Well Spartans, it's been an interesting first half of the year for the Fleming household. A couple of accidents in the car being rammed from behind, watching the Kyrgios and Tomic antics at Wimbledon, my wife's ongoing health issues and Collingwood's early teasing form dropping back down the ladder. This has all been outweighed by the joys of grandparent-hood and being surrounded by their hilarious antics. Throughout life's little ups and downs, one of the reassuring and therapeutic constants is the simple act of running and the great organic chemicals it produces inside our bodies. That's why we keep pulling on the runners regardless of the weather or circumstances. Organic chemicals are so much more superior to any synthetic chemicals and like all the best things in life, they're free!

Jay Fleming  
(S1012)

### FROM THE SECRETARY

Dear Spartans,

Last time I made contact was on 1 July when we, for the first time, defined the "Spartan Financial Year" as 1 July – 30 June to align with our "real" financial year. Thank you so much for your payments, emails and queries. Many Spartans have thanked me for the prompt!

School Term 3 has just started for my children and from now on the remainder year always seems to be very busy. I am so lucky I'm able to maintain my fitness and my children see how happy it makes me. I think they are also appreciating how healthy it keeps us all as well.

As always, if you have any feedback - please email me at [spartans.team@hotmail.com.au](mailto:spartans.team@hotmail.com.au).

Happy running ☺  
Felicity Doolan  
(SF0080)

**VALE VERN GERLACH (S0033)**

I read with sadness in the latest VRR Newsletter of the passing of Spartan Vern Gerlach (S0033). Thank you to STRIDE OUT's Editor, Vin Martin (S0478), for the following:

*"When Vern toed the line in his first Melbourne Marathon in 1978, he was already 53 years old. Vern was in the first cohort of Spartans having run 10 in a row beginning in 1978. Vern's unbeaten streak extended to 24 Melbourne Marathons when he stopped running the event in 2001 at 76 years of age. At his peak in 1991, Vern ran a Melbourne Marathon PB of 3:39:24 at 65 years of age. That is motoring!! Prior to his involvement in Melbourne Marathons, Vern competed in events conducted by the Victorian Marathon Club, and right up until 2013 was a popular runner at Sri Chinmoy events.*

*In his final days, Vern received a visit from Michael Kennedy, President of the Victorian Road Runners and long-time friend Tony Martin, a fellow Spartan.*

*When told of his Life Membership of the Victorian Road Runners, Vern Gerlach raised his arms and fists in jubilation. Just a few days later, Vern passed away peacefully."*

This is an edited excerpt from an article in STRIDE OUT, June 2015, the magazine of the Victorian Road Runners Club. Speeches by Michael Kennedy formed the basis of the original article in STRIDE OUT.

Felicity Doolan  
(SF0080)

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2015 – 14 SEPTEMBER 2015**

**Melbourne Marathon Spartans Club  
Annual General Meeting  
Monday, 14 September 2015 at 7.30 pm  
to be held in the  
Harrison Room at the Melbourne Cricket Ground ("MCG")**

**All Spartans and their families are most welcome.  
*The only thing we do ask (for MCG Security and catering purposes) is that you  
let us know the names\* of those attending.***

**\*RSVP 1 September 2014*****\*RSVP to either:***

Felicity Doolan: spartans.team@hotmail.com or Tel: 0411 405 529  
John Dean: jkdeano@hotmail.com or Tel: 9337 7179

**How to get there:  
Harrison Room**

**COMING BY FOOT** – Enter through Gate 1 between light towers 5 & 6 – take lift/escalator to Level 2  
**COMING BY CAR** – Enter MCG underground parking via Entrance A off Brunton Ave. A Security Officer  
will direct you to park in the Northern Stand – park closest to lifts 1, 2 & 3 & take lift to Level 2.

*Cost: To help with the cost of the Night a Gold coin donation would be appreciated.*

**GUEST SPEAKER**

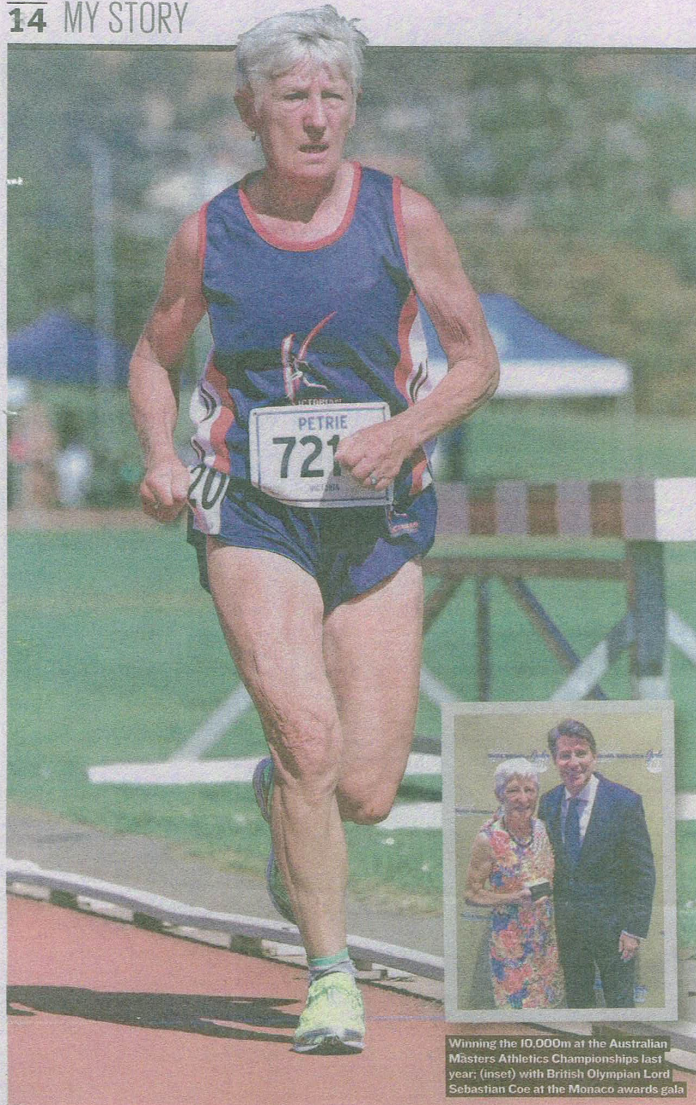
Further to advice in our last Newsletter, we are most fortunate to have Lavinia Petrie as our Guest Speaker. Shortly after that Newsletter, the Sunday Herald Sun's Supplement "Body & Soul" featured Lavinia (17 May 2015). If you missed it please read on. Thanks to the Sunday Herald Sun for letting me include this inspirational article. I am really looking forward to hearing Lavinia speak at the AGM.

**UPDATED CONSTITUTION**

As mentioned at last year's AGM, the Committee has drafted a new Constitution which requires adoption by our Members. This will be an Agenda item and will be circulated (under separate email) prior to the AGM. Should you wish to read now newly drafted Constitution you will find it on our website by following this link:

[http://www.melbournemarathonspartans.com/files/SPARTANS\\_GOVERNING\\_RULES.pdf](http://www.melbournemarathonspartans.com/files/SPARTANS_GOVERNING_RULES.pdf)



**B+S**  
**14 MY STORY**


Winning the 10,000m at the Australian Masters Athletics Championships last year; (inset) with British Olympian Lord Sebastian Coe at the Monaco awards gala

# "I HIT MY PEAK AT 70 AND NOW HAVE EIGHT WORLD RECORDS"

Lavinia Petrie, 71, was recently named best female masters athlete in the world and she's "accidentally" set numerous records. She shares her unusual secrets with Beverley Hadgraft

**"W**e didn't do much running at school in England, just the 150 yards. I'd get a second or third place and that was that. It wasn't until I discovered cross-country running, married my husband, Bob, and had my

daughter, June, that I had my first major win – the 1968 Northern Counties title in. It made headlines: "Unknown beats Olympic athlete". Everyone was amazed. I was a new mum; my only training was lunchtime runs with a friend. I was amazed myself and wondered what I could do with some effort.

The following year, we moved to Australia. I joined Ringwood Athletic Club in Victoria, and continued running cross country. Then Bob asked if I wanted to join him in a 25km road race. "I might as well," I said, even though the most I'd ever run was 7km. I had men puffing alongside

**"People have seen me eat a pie directly before a race and I'm famous for my love of scones as well"**

me, telling me to take it easy, and my result created another news headline, "Female beats 16 men in road race".

I ran until I was five months' pregnant with my daughter, Julie, mainly because I didn't realise I was pregnant. I also kept running after my third child, Rob, was born, even though I was still working. "How do you do it?" people asked and I'd joke, "Oh, Bob winds me up, puts me on the track and off I go."

In 1973, I won the Australian Cross Country title. I then became captain of the first women's team to go to the World Cross Country Championships in Morocco. I also won the inaugural Victorian Women's Marathon Championship in 1981. We all had to have medicals first to prove that we were capable.

Marathon running had also been Bob's idea. After the first one that I finished, in 1977, everyone exclaimed, "Lavinia, you almost broke three hours."

Apparently I was 66 seconds off breaking three hours, but that didn't mean anything to me. I'm not even sure if I could've gone faster – Bob had entered me in a 20km training race three weeks before, but it had turned out to be 20 miles [32km], so I was feeling pretty shot!

## HITTING MY STRIDE

I went on to run lots of ultra distances after that, including two 100km runs. The first one I did, I broke the Australasian record.

I managed a few more world bests along the way, but it was when I hit 70 that I reached my peak. I got the first record on my birthday. It was a one-hour track race and I was just trying for a Victorian record for my age group, but accidentally broke the world record as well. The way I'm running, I could break some more, I thought.

After that, I went on to break 3km, 5km and 10km world records.

Last September, my efforts were recognised when I was named female masters athlete of the year by the International Association of Athletics Federations. I was invited to travel to Monaco to collect my award.

The day before I was due to leave, there was an athletics meeting at Bendigo so I went along to support everyone. I looked at the program and thought, I might as well run the 1000m while I'm here, so I did. Then I thought I might as well run the 3000m as well. I looked at the clock as I finished and realised I'd just beaten my own world record! It was broken by 15 seconds, too – and it made me the oldest woman to ever go sub-13 minutes for the 3000m.

It was even more wonderful collecting my award in Monaco after that. My daughters, June and Julie, both now keen runners, came with me. I was up on cloud nine for quite a while; even now I'm still only down to cloud five.

## BUILT TO RUN

Today I hold eight world record times, and people are always asking what my secret is, but I don't know – my body just seems to be able to handle running.

I don't put pressure on myself. I don't swim, do weights or stretch. I'm not one of those people who carries a drink bottle everywhere. In fact, in my last marathon I had two sips of water and that was only to get my energy gel down.

My diet? Well, people still comment on how they've seen me eat a pie directly before a race, and I'm also famous for my love of scones. In fact, for morning tea I'll have four scones piled high with cream and jam.

It's a shame Bob hasn't been around to see what I've achieved. Sadly, he died in 2000. He had epilepsy and suffered a fatal seizure before a marathon. I know he would have been proud and glad that I kept on running.

I'm lucky. Over the years, other runners my age have had to give up with knee or hip problems, but I just seem to get better. Someone even told me recently, "I think we'll have to dissect you to see what makes you tick!"

## LAVINIA'S RUNNING RECORDS

Lavinia holds these five world records for women 70-74:

- **1HR TRACK** 13.044m
- **HALF MARATHON** 1 hr 37.38 mins
- **10,000M** 44.43.27 mins
- **5KM** 21.34.08 mins
- **3KM** 12.52.03 mins

She also still holds three "world best performances" set in previous years:

- **ROAD 50KM** 3 hrs 41.57 mins for women 50-54 (set in 1994)
- **TRACK 50KM** 3 hrs 50.15 mins for women 50-54 (set in 1993)
- **1HR TRACK** 13.823m for women 60-64 (set in 2003)



## SUNDAY 5 JULY – HALL OF FAME/SPARTAN RUN



L-R: David Foskey, Nev Gardner, Cath Bombardieri, Roger Weinstein, John Dobson, Peter Ryan, Dennis Nish, Justin Hansen, Mike Zervos, Jay Fleming, Ray Cilia, Brian Walsh, Frank Biviano, Bryan Flegg, Antony Martin, Felicity Doolan, Carli Iovenitti

We were delighted with the turnout of Hall of Famers, Legends and other Spartans who attended our advertised run on 5 July at the Tan. It was followed by a leisurely breakfast at Jardin Tan. Click on the link for more photos

<http://melbournemarathonspartans.com/spartans-club-runs/>

**Stay tuned for our next scheduled "Club Run".**

## VICTORIAN ROAD RUNNERS



Join the **Victorian Road Runners** on the first Saturday of each month at the Tan, commencing at 7.30 am for a 4km or 8km (or more!). Jay hopes to see you for a lap or two and a catch up on Saturday, 1 August.

<http://www.vrr.org.au/>

## **THE VIRTUES OF VOLUNTEERING**

True confession: I've been a leaner and not a lifter for years. Like most Spartans, I have participated in 100s of events but never done anything other than paying an entry fee to help.

Two things have changed this. The first is that I'm fascinated by Ironman events but know that I'll never be able to compete. So, this year I became one of the 2200 volunteers for the Melbourne event. The organisers wisely allocated a non skilled job, that of a marshall at the 8k mark of the run. Here I saw the leaders go through, completely in control and at a cracking pace. I also saw Karen, my spin class instructor, on her way to a fine result. I stayed until the last runners came past, most of whom had no chance of completing the course in the allocated time. Many of these were overseas entrants who had not only paid almost \$1000 for the privilege of competing, but had also incurred travel and accommodation costs. It was rewarding to read their names and shout some encouragement. I'll be back next year, perhaps even getting a promotion to a more challenging job.

The second is my discovery of Parkrun. These 5k events, 8am Saturday at a venue (<http://www.parkrun.com.au/>) near you, rely totally on volunteers. Participants are encouraged to occasionally forgo their run to be one of the people who ensure the smooth operation of these events. My contribution has been modest, but sufficient to observe that the volunteers enjoy their tasks and obtain satisfaction from their contribution to the success of the morning.

Legend David Foskey  
(S0025)

## **MY FAVOURITE RUN**

My favourite run is around my own neighbourhood. We've lived near the Angliss Hospital in Upper Ferntree Gully for 15 years now. When we first looked at the house and I saw the hills, I knew I would save a fortune on gym memberships. Even though I'm a music freak, I've never ever taken to running with headphones as I've always preferred nature's soundtracks. I actually enjoy the sound of gravel, leaves or bitumen underfoot and similarly I enjoy hearing the breezes whispering through the trees. I also enjoy listening to the social lives of the possum and bird communities all around me or the sounds of humans doing some landscaping, gardening, hammering or arguing with their children. For the most part there are no footpaths which is just the way I like it. Like all of us, I have several different

lengths and versions of my runs but I always make sure that whichever version I'm running on the day finishes with the Talaskia Steps. Now for those that don't know where they are, if you stand at the street corner of The Angliss and look up, it's a view that perhaps may have inspired Led Zeppelin's 'Stairway to Heaven' back in the day. I love finishing every single run with my very own stairway to heaven and some part of me is certain that any fauna observing such regular occurrences must think we humans are a funny old species. I always sprint up them as fast as I can and when I get to the top, I love the feeling of my heart jumping out of my chest. From there, I walk the 200m back to our driveway, letting the heart rate settle back down while appreciating the mountain which on certain days looks like it's hanging out of the clouds. Depending on the weather, I then sit on the front deck while the sweat dries and due to the highly oxygenated state, I find it very easy to drift off in thought or trance. In fact some of my best thoughts, plans and ideas have come during these highly oxygenated nirvana moments and I always capture them on a notepad before they leave me. Who needs drugs!

Jay Fleming  
(S1012)

Do you have a favourite run you would like to share with us? If so, please email us at [spartans.team@hotmail.com](mailto:spartans.team@hotmail.com) and I'll include in the next Newsletter.



L-R (those in Spartan singlets only): Roger Weinstein, John Dobson, Nev Gardner, Bruce Hargreaves, John Dean, Frank Biviano, Wayne Thompson



## WINNERS!

### **RANDOM PRIZE DRAW FOR FINANCIAL SPARTANS**

Our second prize draw was held at our June Committee Meeting. This time, Committee Member, Cath Bombardieri drew our winner - **MEELYN O'CONNOR (SF0059)**. Congratulations Meelyn, I hope you are enjoying reading "The Wall" whilst drinking from your new Spartans mug!



L-R David Foskey, Rod Bayley, Ashley Page & Cath Bombardieri

### **NEWSLETTER COMPETITION FOR FINANCIAL SPARTANS**

In our last (May) Newsletter you were asked to guess which Marathon the spectators in this photo are trying to watch? The Answer? **The 1908 London Olympic Marathon**. Congratulations **DAVID MARTINI (S1171)** who won a copy of "The Wall".



## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FOR 2015/2016 - \$20

You will have received an email on 1 July advising that your 2015/16 Annual Membership of \$20 is due. Please note this is the first time we have advertised this to align with the "Financial Year".

Payment options are below:

<b>EFT:</b> Melbourne Marathon Spartans Club BSB: 633-000 Account No: 139201743 Please include name and/or Spartan Number	<b>Cheque 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 each year however are most welcome to! Obviously if any of your details have changed we would like to know so that our database is up to date. The Form is available via this link:

[http://www.melbournemarathonspartans.com/files/SPARTANS\\_MEMBERSHIP\\_FORM\\_2015\\_16.pdf](http://www.melbournemarathonspartans.com/files/SPARTANS_MEMBERSHIP_FORM_2015_16.pdf)

## **2015 MELBOURNE MARATHON – 18 OCTOBER**

If you haven't registered, don't forget to join the Spartan's team. Here is the link to enter:

<https://eventdesq.imgstg.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=main&EventDesqID=11686&OrgID=1142>

## **MILESTONES**

If you are going to run your 10, 15, 20, 25, 30 or 35<sup>th</sup> Melbourne Marathon in 2015, we would like to hear from you so we can acknowledge your milestone! Remember that you can purchase your Spartan singlet to run your milestone marathon. Please email: [spartans.team@hotmail.com](mailto:spartans.team@hotmail.com).

## **SPARTAN SINGLETS**

New Singlets are \$45 and we also have some very limited stock of the old style singlets at \$10 per singlet. Please email us if you would like an extra Singlet.

## **RECIPE CORNER**



### ***THAI PUMPKIN & SWEET POTATO SOUP***

#### **Ingredients:**

2 tablespoons Olive Oil  
2 Onions, peeled & chopped  
1 Leek  
½ red Capsicum  
1 large Sweet Potato  
1 large Butternut Pumpkin  
1 litre Chicken Stock  
400mls Coconut Milk  
1 Tablespoon Cumin Powder  
1 Tablespoon Coriander Powder

Dollop of Sour Cream & fresh Coriander to serve

*Chop Onions & Leek and fry in Olive Oil until soft.*

*Add chopped Capsicum*

*Peel & chop Sweet Potato & Pumpkin and boil or microwave until soft, then add to  
Onion mixture*

*Add Chicken Stock, Coconut Milk, Cumin & Coriander Powder.*

*Puree Soup until Smooth.*

*Bring to the boil.*

*Serve with Crusty Bread and top with Sour Cream & Chopped Coriander*

## **ADVERTISING ON THE WEBSITE!**

Don't forget, we now have advertisers:

<http://melbournemarathonspartans.com/advertisers>

**Please identify yourselves as Spartans when you visit them.**

Would you like to advertise your business or know of someone who would? Please email Committee member John Kaparelis via [spartans.team@hotmail.com](mailto:spartans.team@hotmail.com).



### **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, being able to avail of refreshments and free massage after finishing the marathon, receive benefits and discounts from companies that advertise on our website.

### **Contact Information**

**Email:** [spartans.team@hotmail.com](mailto:spartans.team@hotmail.com)

**Website:** [www.melbournemarathonspartans.com](http://www.melbournemarathonspartans.com)

**Postal:** P.O. Box 162., Rosanna Vic 3084

#### **Life Members**

Paul Basile, Peter Battrick, John Dean, John Dobson, Peter Feldman, Jack Fredrickson, Christine Hodges, Ken Matchett (Dec'd), Conor McNeice, John Raskas, Ron Young, Shirley Young, Peter Ryan, Maureen Wilson

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>	Felicity Doolan	0411 405 529
<b>Webmaster</b>	David Foskey	0432 146 747
<b>Immediate Past President</b>	John Dean	9337 7179
<b>Committee</b>	Cath Bombardieri	0407 996 356
<b>Committee</b>	John Dobson	0412 688 287
<b>Committee</b>	John Kaparelis	0447 447 448
<b>Committee</b>	Ashley Page	0448 866 025
<b>Committee</b>	Colin Silcock Delaney	5598 6090

### Website References:

[www.melbournemarathon.com](http://www.melbournemarathon.com)  
[www.melbournemarathonspartans.com](http://www.melbournemarathonspartans.com)  
[www.coolrunning.com.au](http://www.coolrunning.com.au)  
[www.vicmastersaths.org.au](http://www.vicmastersaths.org.au)  
[www.athsvic.org.au](http://www.athsvic.org.au)  
[www.athletics.com.au](http://www.athletics.com.au)  
[www.vrr.org.au](http://www.vrr.org.au)  
[www.runnersworld.com.au](http://www.runnersworld.com.au)  
[www.run4yourlife.com.au](http://www.run4yourlife.com.au)  
[www.traralgonmarathon.org.au](http://www.traralgonmarathon.org.au)  
[www.sixfoot.com](http://www.sixfoot.com)  
[www.ausrunning.net](http://www.ausrunning.net)  
[www.runningcalendar.com.au](http://www.runningcalendar.com.au)  
[www.parkrun.com.au](http://www.parkrun.com.au)

### CONTRIBUTIONS TO THIS NEWSLETTER

All Spartans have great stories. If you would like to share one please email us at [spartans.team@hotmail.com](mailto:spartans.team@hotmail.com). We would love to hear from you 😊.