

Coliban Relay Results & Report

Sat June 28, 2008

The Coliban Relays will always be a long day at the office and a logistical challenge that makes the actual running easy in comparison. 2008 was no exception. Challenge one was working out who would be right for the men's team. With Michael McNaughton returning from a dodgy hamstring and Ryan Christian fighting the aftermath of a dodgy vindaloo, 1st reserve Wes Benson spent the preceding week not knowing whether to enter taper mode, or blow his car doors off at training in preparation for the Eastern Gardens 16k in 2 weeks time. Come race morning, the hamstring and the hamstrung bowel were given the benefit of the doubt. Whether that would prove to be the right decision, you will have to read on.

Challenge two: navigational skills (Landy Field to Coliban) - FAIL. Troopy led the procession of cars. I'm not sure whether he was trying to work out the transport logistics once we got there or whether he was suffering from caffeine withdrawal (probably both), but his inbuilt auto pilot had us heading towards Ballarat rather than Coliban. By the time consciousness returned, we were well into the western districts and enjoyed a tour of Dog Rocks before getting back on track. As a result, our 11.45am deadline of checking in Lyn Taylor as our official was well and truly shot and team disqualification threatened. Fortunately Andre LaGerche had arrived from Melbourne on time and was forced to take a break from kick to kick footy with himself to check in for Lyn. Little did Lyn know that she was close to running the 10k leg for us as I then had a hard time convincing Andre to hand over his officiating duties!

Challenge three: make it to race start with clear plans for the logistics - PASS. Troopy came through with the goods on this one - maybe the detour had been worthwhile!

Men's Race:

Mark Tucker got us off to a great start and led into the 1st changeover by 5 secs over Glenhuntly. Michael McNaughton took over for leg 2 that starts with a slight climb before a very steep downhill. From all reports we would have had a new 200m WR had someone had a stopwatch on it, a feat that would come back to bite him on the ascent 5k in! Nevertheless, our sprinter held on valiantly to tag Ryan Christian in 2nd place only about 50m shy of the Hunters.

As we watched Ryan take off we wondered whether his somersaulting bowels would hold up. He had been running for a large part of the morning, just not with his legs! We also wondered if it was a good sign that Michael McNaughton looked better at the end of his leg than Ryan did at the start. Alas, we can now say with level 1 scientific evidence that the bowels contribute significantly to running performance as poor Ryan "guts'd it out" (pardon the pun) to the end but finished about 2mins behind where he would have expected to finish. Fittingly, this superb display of dedication earned Ryan the **BUSH INN AWARD** for the day, but we are waiting a few days before handing it over!

Andre "Mr Fun Run" LaGerche was next on stage 4a. If that sounds confusing, don't worry because the AV officials were even more confused at the changeover! His 3rd place in the Run Melbourne Half Marathon the week before was always going to make this run interesting but at least he had finally relinquished that footy of his which I thought for a while was going to make the 10k journey too. Aside from wanting to strangle me after the run for calling his leg "undulating" rather than "mountainous", he performed most admirably but failed our simple request of making up the 60 sec difference to Steve Moneghetti!

I (Brett Coleman) was up next on leg 4 (hopefully that confuses you further!). Enough said, we'll move on to the last leg! Actually not much to report for my leg except to say that I was given a swift kick up the backside when Ben Ashkettle (Doncaster), had made up what must have been about a 60 sec gap I had on him 4km into the 7.9km stage. At least Lee Troop would have someone to chase on the final leg...

Troop was looking for a fast hitout over the 5.1km last leg in preparation for the Gold Coast Half the following week. And fast he traveled but not quite fast enough to make up the 5 or 6 minute lead that Ballarat YCW had on us! In the end we finished 6th in Div 1 with Ballarat YCW running out impressive winners. With the first 6 teams all within 4mins over 43kms or so of running, it was certainly a close tussle.

Women's Race

With only 5 women putting up their hands to run for 5 places, picking the team was rather straight forward. That left no room for gastrointestinal acrobatics, however. Freyja Troop led off and ran strongly up the 132m ascent that hopefully bodes well for her marathon debut at Gold Coast next week. Good luck Freyja.

Cathryn Hoare the leg 2 specialist was next having run this stage for the past 4 or so years. Having watched Michael turn himself inside out down that first downhill section, I'm told Cathryn opted for a more appropriate pace that would leave her legs with some reserve for the 5k hill.

Kristen Wyatt was up next on leg 3 and although she didn't say as much I'm sure she was keeping a close eye on where her feet landed knowing that Ryan Christian had not long earlier entertained (take that as you will) the same terrain. Despite my warning about leaving a little in reserve on the steep hill at 3k, Kristen found herself reduced to almost a walk on the following steep rocky descent courtesy of out of control legs (a bitter experience I recall vividly in 2007).

Kristen handed over to Julie McNamara for leg 4 (there is no leg 4a for the women). Regrettably I have little to report having completed the same leg myself at the same time. As I went past I did offer some encouragement but got nothing in return, so either she was indeed giving it her all or I ran past so quickly that she didn't see me. I'll leave it to you to decide which is the more likely!

Eliesha Byrt (our most recent **BUSH INN AWARD** winner) was up for the final leg. I'm not sure how her time relates to her PB but if the smile on her face at the end of the day was anything to go by, it must have been pretty damn good!

Unofficially the women's team finished 10th but it's a challenge in itself trying to work that out with the current raw data on the AV website so I could be mistaken.

Finally, thanks a million to Lyn Taylor who put her hand up to be our official for the day.

Results:

Mens Open

Mark Tucker	16.52	(5.5km)
Michael McNaughton	21.09	(6.0km)
Ryan Christian	29.14	(8.4km)
Andre LaGerche	33.32	(10.0km)
Brett Coleman	25.30	(7.9km)
Lee Troop	14.35	(5.1km)

Women's Open

Freyja Troop	26.32	(5.5km)
Cathryn Hoare	26.42	(6.0km)
Kristen Wyatt	33.39	(8.4km)
Julie McNamara	33.02	(7.9km)
Eliesha Byrt	25.20	(5.1km)

NB: Times above are my best estimate as there are obvious errors with the AV times as they have been reported to date - take them with a grain of salt. That said, Troopy & I both timed ourselves so they are ok but kindly, AV took 45 secs off my time and donated those to Troopy!

BUSH INN AWARD

As mentioned in the report, Ryan Christian was the very worthy winner for this round for displaying great dedication to the team and giving his all in gut wrenching circumstances! Well done Ryan. We trust that you are well again soon and enjoy the hospitality of The Bush Inn.

Geelong Region Team Awards:

Coliban Relays

Senior Women

3 votes: Kristen Wyatt
2 votes: Julie McNamara
1 vote: Cathryn Hoare

Senior Men

3 votes: Lee Troop
2 votes: Mark Tucker
1 vote: Andre LaGerche