

BENITA JOHNSON. WORLD CROSS - COUNTRY CHAMPION.

Benita Johnson has been knocking on the elite running door in world athletics for three years. With a sixth, a fourth and a fifth placings in the 2001 - 2003 World Cross-Country Championships and many other top performances on the European Grand Prix Circuit, Benita was a rising star in a sport dominated by African athletes. However, on the muddy hills of Brussels' Royal Garden Parc Van Laeken, Benita kicked the door down with a stunning performance in the World Cross - Country Championships that has rocketed her into Olympic medal calculations.

I was fortunate to catch up with Benita for a chat at Falls Creek, where much of the hard work was completed, before she headed overseas.

N.M. This time last year was your first stint at Falls Creek. However, the bushfires forced you to make a hurried evacuation. How long were you planning to stay for?

B.J. We were planning to stay for three weeks and yes, the evacuation was a bit rushed as we didn't think it was going to be so bad. However, we woke up one morning and the whole mountain was covered in smoke so we had to pack and leave pretty quickly. Then, the day after we arrived home in Canberra, the fires really took hold there and created the horror scenes that shocked all of Australia. So it was a bit disappointing because I really enjoyed my ten days up here and we arrived home thinking we didn't really finish what we'd set out to do. Now, we're back up here and the training is going well and I hope to be coming up here for the next ten or so years.

N.M. How has Canberra and the trails around the city recovered from the bushfires?

B.J. It's recovering slowly. Chapman is taking a while to recover. I run up there once a week over summer while my husband, Cameron plays cricket. Slowly people are going back to their blocks and rebuilding but it will all take time. However, there are a lot of things being put in place so that any future fires won't cause the devastation that last year's fires did.

N.M. You are almost a full time athlete these days. How much of last year did you spend overseas?

B.J. Aaahhh. I would estimate that I spent about eight months overseas last year. It was a fair while but each year from now on will mean about the same amount of time overseas. And even when I'm home in Australia, a lot of the time I'm not staying at home in Canberra. So yes, I do travel around a lot. But if you want to be the best in the world, you have to race the best in the world, and they're all in Europe so that's where I need to be. Luckily I travel really well, I enjoy the travel and seeing new places. Most of all, I'm really happy in our training base in London.

N.M. You would not have seen a winter for the last few years.

B.J. No, I haven't. But as I come from northern Queensland (Mackay), I'm not a winter person anyway so it works out well. My first few winters when I moved to Canberra hit me pretty hard. However, we've had some pretty cold conditions at our altitude training camps and London, even in summer, can be pretty cold.

N.M. This year you will be at Falls Creek for about a month. What are you trying to achieve?

B.J. The main goal of this training camp is to get the training done, tick the days off, to get really fit and to get ready for the World Cross-Country Championships in March. For me the key is consistency and patience because if you're consistent and patient, you become very fit and you run well. We're not here to do anything special, no super hard sessions that might cause me to dig a hole for myself, just doing everything right.

N.M. Are you doing any training on heart - rate while you're here?

B.J. Yes, we are. We do runs that we call 'pace runs' that are quite individualised so we are not training above what we should be doing. At altitude you have to be a little careful as the thinner air and the challenging terrain can sometimes

make you work harder than is required. I think the 'pace runs' have really helped my training, especially with my Half - Marathon training after Paris. We all have our limits and I think it's important that we train at a pace that is optimum for us rather than trying to keep up with a faster group.

N.M. Are your 'pace runs' completed off a percentage of your maximum heart - rate?

B.J. Yes, they are. It's taken off the maximum heart - rate recorded when we do a VO2 max test. My maximum heart - rate is 190 beats per minute so I'm a little lower than some of the others in our training group.

N.M. So, what is a 'pace run' heart rate for you?

B.J. It's about 170 - 175. If I got up to 180, it would probably mean that I was going too hard.

N.M. You have talked about being consistent in your training but you also showed a lot of discipline and common - sense the other day when you had a slight head cold and took the morning off. Common - sense and distance running does not always go 'hand in hand' so taking the day off must have been hard for a full-time athlete to do?

B.J. Yes, it was hard but I had a bit of a head cold on Sunday and my long morning run wasn't very fast but I just tried to get on top of it quickly by not running Sunday afternoon, then taking Monday morning off. Cameron also had a head cold so we went down to Brighton and relaxed for the day. Anyway, now I'm feeling 100% but if I'd battled on with the cold, I might be still struggling. I think that reading your body is so important for distance runners and it's something that I haven't been particularly good at in the past but as I get older and wiser, I'm improving in this area. Also, Nic is fantastic in holding us back a little when it's needed. From what I've seen, most elite athletes tend to 'over - train' rather than 'under - train'.

N.M. You need that external person to say, "hey - you're not going to lose any fitness, take a day off and get over it quickly!"

B.J. Yes, that's right. In the 'big picture', having half a day off is nothing, especially when you've got all those miles in the bank.

N.M. Obviously Athens is the ultimate goal for 2004 but what are your other plans?

B.J. Yes, Athens is the main goal but in the lead-up to the Olympics I will be running the World Cross again. This year I will be moving up to the 8 kilometre Long Course after competing in the 4 kilometres Short Course for the last three years. I think I'm heading towards the longer distances so the 8 kilometre, while being a challenge, should suit me. I'm a little disappointed that I didn't get to run it last year but I originally chose to run the shorter race, so I stuck with that. Then after World Cross, we have another stint of altitude training at Laguna Mountain near San Diego. Along the way, I'll probably do a few road races.

(Ed. On March 28, Benita finished second in the Carlsbad 5 km. Road Race, running 15.07 behind Kenya's Isabella Ochichi, who ran a World Best Time for a Road 5000 m. (14.53)

N.M. The 2003 season has been a fantastic year for you with many outstanding performances. You finished fifth at the World Cross-Country after being third with about 30 metres to go. Your memories of that race?

B.J. I don't have particularly fond memories of that race. I think I was a little impatient in the final 200 metres. I went too early and I had absolutely nothing left over the final 50 metres. The two Kenyans who went past me within sight of the line had never beaten me before so it was extremely disappointing to lose a medal by only a second or two to athletes I had previously beaten. But while that was extremely disappointing at the time, I think it helped me stay really motivated for the rest of the season. For about a week after World Cross, I was pretty down but then I decided to look forward and to really work hard at improving my tactical racing and my strength at the end of races. A few months later, I'm sure that an improvement in these areas helped me win a medal in Portugal.

(Ed. Benita finished third in the World Half - Marathon Championship in Portugal)

N.M. This time last year you were coming off an Australian 5000 metre record, which must have been very satisfying. However, you decided to move up to the 10 000 metres for the Paris World Championships. Why?

B.J. I had been doing a lot more training towards the 10 k. And even though I had only done one other track 10 000 metres previously, I felt more confident with the extra distance leading into Paris. Also, my training sessions indicated that I was capable of running a very fast time so I felt very confident going into the race. A lot of the training we do gives us a really good indication as to what sort of times we can run. I honestly thought I had a shot at a medal and even though it did not happen, I ran a fantastic time that has helped set me up for Athens.

N.M. Did you think you were in shape to run 30:37.68?

B.J. Ah no. I thought if I could run under 31 minutes it would be fantastic but I thought it would take a few more years to get down to that sort of time. Looking back and thinking about the race, perhaps I could have run a little faster. I went out with the leaders and went through 5000 metres quite fast. Perhaps, if I was a little slower early on I could have come home much faster which makes me believe that I could still have some more improvement left in me for Athens.

N.M. When Paula Radcliffe stands on the starting line in a 10 000 metre race, you know what to expect. Did you expect the Chinese girl (Yingjie Sun - third in 30:07.20) to run so aggressively?

B.J. Not really, but with the Chinese it's a little hard to know what sort of shape they're in as they don't race in Europe. But I didn't expect the Ethiopians to do any of the front running so Kiplagat (4th in 30:12.53) and Sun had to push the pace if they were going to win. I guess it was a phenomenal race to be in with so many fast times recorded. (Berhane Adere of Ethiopia won in 30:04.18 while places second through to sixteenth were the fastest marks-for-place in history). However, I know what these girls can do now and I think that I can match them in Athens.

N.M. Did you watch any of the other distance races in Paris?

B.J. Yes, the Men's 10 000 metres was the day after my race and it was unbelievable - I couldn't believe the times they were running.

N.M. Who were you barracking for - Gebrselassie or Bekele?

B.J. Ummm I do like Bekele - he's a cute Ethiopian.

N.M. And he's about your height.

B.J. Yes, he is. I went back to London soon after my race but I was glued to the TV watching the BBC coverage of the athletics. I think Michael Johnson (champion 200 / 400 metre runner) is a great commentator and I really enjoyed their coverage.

N.M. So even in recovery mode, you're watching athletics - sounds like a busman's holiday!

B.J. Yes, I love watching sport.

N.M. After your fabulous run in the 10 000 metres (8th place) you had a choice of running the World Championships 5000 metres or going home. You and Nic decided that you'd go home, freshen-up, then train for the World Half - Marathon Championship. What was the longest race you'd completed before the World Half?

B.J. Ummmm 10 kilometres on the road.

N.M. So it was a big jump.

B.J. Yes, it was a very big jump. I decided not to push it too much after the World Champs 10 k. so we left Paris two days after my race. The World Half - Marathon was my next big goal but it was also a bit of fun at the end of my season. I was picked in the team on the basis of my performance at World Champs and while I thought I could run very well, it was also unknown territory. But I was thrilled with my performance, to finish on so strongly and win a medal at World level.

N.M. It was quite a warm day in Portugal and getting hotter as the day progressed.

B.J. Yes, definitely. Our race started at 11:30 am. and the Men's Race started at 9:30 am. I remember watching the men and it was hot with almost direct sunlight for them. By the time our race started, it was even hotter. I was taking drinks twice each lap and there were six laps so I was taking in a lot of fluid. Also, I think there were something like 80 turns in the whole race so with the heat and the turns, it made it pretty tough and a slow course. But it was a World Championships so you run for a win, not a time.

N.M. You mentioned taking on drinks during the race which is something you would not have found necessary before. Did you practice this leading up to the Half - Marathon because there's an art to drinking on the run?

B.J. Yes, I did. Sonia (O'Sullivan) had given me a few of her water bottles she'd used when she ran the New York Marathon so I had some pretty cool little water bottles to use. I would practice drinking on our pace runs. I was using a 7 % electrolyte solution mixed with water so it was very diluted with just a tiny amount of taste. Cameron was a Team Manager so he had to hand me the drink bottles which was great. So I was taking one these drinks each lap as well as water on the other side of the lap loop.

N.M. To show how tough the conditions were, even Paula Radcliffe was slowing considerably over the concluding stages.

(Results: 1. Paula Radcliffe 1:07.35 2. Berhane Adere 1:09.02 3. Benita Johnson 1:09.26

B.J. Yes, it was extremely tough and there were moments during the race when negative thoughts crept into my head. However, I had to pull myself together and keep working hard over the closing stages. With a lap to go I was coming sixth but the athletes in front of me were slowing. Also, the spectators were yelling out that I was catching people - everyone seems to love an Aussie. Then I could see people up ahead which gave me a real boost. But it was close as I only got into the bronze medal position with 100 metres to go so I had to finish fast. The majority of the crowd were around the finish and they were going wild so it is a moment I'll always remember because it was my first World Championship medal.

N.M. And a great way to bounce back after just missing a medal at World Cross-Country?

B.J. Definitely, and a great way to end my season. I really wanted to finish off with something really positive so I could use that as a spring board leading into Athens. I know that I can run a lot faster but I was so happy with how I ran the race and my final place.

N.M. From 5 k. to 10 k. to Half Marathon - you don't need to be Einstein to work out where this is heading. Have you thought of the marathon?

B.J. Yes, I would love to do one, but I'm not exactly sure when. Probably after the Olympics. I'm 24 now and I'll be 25 at the Athens Olympics so, as I'm getting older, I believe that I can handle the training required to run a marathon. Then, it would be just a case of having the mental ability to run the longer distances but I'm sure that I could handle that. Also, it would be a new challenge and I'm always looking for new challenges. I think new challenges keeps me motivated.

N.M. Is there a possibility of you running a marathon at the end of 2004?

B.J. There could be but it depends on what happens in Athens. Because the Olympics are in August, I will keep training on after Athens so we'll wait and see. At the moment, Athens is my number one priority but I might be looking for something fun to do after that.

N.M. This time last year a key session for you was a 6 x 3 minute fartlek. Twelve months later you're doing 8 x 3 minutes fartlek sessions. Has your training across the board increased by 10 - 15 % over the last year?

B.J. Yes, I'd say so. My afternoon easy runs are all a little longer and my harder sessions are now definitely harder. The increases have not been really dramatic, but rather gradual. Leading up to Athens I'll be doing very similar training as to what I was doing leading up to the World Championships in Paris. I just think that I can now handle a little more training which is a good thing. But yes, you're right 8 x 3 minutes or 8 x 1000 metres is the type of session I now do in training.

N.M. How many kilometres would you now be covering in a standard week?

B.J. I'd say about 150 - 160 kilometres a week. I don't actually count the kilometres I run because we usually run for time. However, I should get into the habit of counting kilometres for consistency.

N.M. What was a key session in both the build-up to your Paris 10 000 metres and the World Half-Marathon?

B.J. I think the 'pace runs' we did in Bushy Park were very important. We'd do 45 minute runs with varying heart-rates so our speed would either increase or decrease depending on the type of result we wanted. I found this was race specific as I'd sometimes run for 30 minutes with a certain heart-rate, then try to increase the heart-rate and pace for the last 15 minutes, like you'd do in a race when you're fatigued. I really enjoy these sort of sessions and they certainly were a key to racing well.

N.M. Was there a key track session that got you 'cherry ripe' for Paris?

B.J. I only do track once a week and they change around each week. I just think completing all my track sessions was a key to running well in Paris. However, there was one session we did of 13 x 400 metres with a 400 metre 'float' between that was important in my build-up. All together it was 10 000 metres and it gave me a lot of confidence and got me used to 10 km. track rhythm.

N.M. Can you remember the time you did for the 10 km. session?

B.J. I think I did about 32.20. However, I regard training as training and a means to racing well, rather than looking at one key session. All the training sessions are important in helping you to race well. (Ed. At the Australian Athletic Championships / Olympic Selection Trials in Sydney during February, Benita completed the same session during the Women's 10 000 metres Final. With training partner, Haley McGregor for company during the first half of the race, Benita alternated 400 metres @ 5000 metre race - pace (71 - 72 seconds) with a lap recovery @ marathon pace (81 - 82 seconds) before sprinting the last lap as fast as possible (67 seconds) Benita, wearing racing flats, won convincingly in 31:49.97. Benita said the surging simulated the aggressive tactics of the Kenyans, while the sustained change of pace was akin to the methods used by the Ethiopians.)

N.M. A lot of Nic's runners are doing regular gym / circuit sessions regularly. Are you doing these extra sessions too?

B.J. Yes. I do strides and drills once or twice a week. Then, I also do some core stability work on the Swiss Ball, probably five times a week. However, I don't do a lot of gym work. I feel that it's important to be strong enough to prevent injuries before they happen. But I feel a lot stronger from doing the core stability work and Cameron and I work these out together.

N.M. Cameron, of course, is a physio so as a runner, you've married very well.

B.J. Yes, you could say that.

N.M. For you, all roads lead to Athens. Have you been there to check out the facilities?

B.J. No, I haven't. But I've heard that it's a very busy place and I don't particularly want to be there too long before my race. We plan to run the Athens Grand Prix this year and possibly stay on to train for a few days to check things out - the training facilities, the tracks, the Olympic Stadium. Also, I'd like to see what the Athens' summer heat is like.

N.M. You've grown up in northern Queensland. Do you run well in the heat?

B.J. Yes, many of my best races have been in the heat. Last year I won two hot weather races in Seville and Madrid. It's something that I've just grown up with so it doesn't seem to affect me. I think Athens will be a fairly dry heat, like Spain is dry.

N.M. Not too many people have sat in the call room before an Olympic race or a World Championships or a World Cross-Country. What do you do while you're waiting to race?

B.J. When I first get to the call area, I like to read trashy magazines and just sit quietly and relax. I also think of Nic's tactical advice. At World Cross-Country the final call room is very hectic. You just put a transponder around your ankle, then you're sent off to a big patch of grass behind the start barriers until the start. Here, I like to do a few strides, go to the toilet and think to myself about what I'm going to do in the race. However, mainly I'm trying to relax and keep warm. Generally, I don't talk to anyone, I just make sure I go to the toilet one last time and have a few sips of water.

N.M. When you're training so hard and running twice a day, recovery is extremely important. As a full-time athlete, with a fair bit of time on your hands, what sort of things have you been doing at Falls Creek so that you're ready for your next run?

B.J. Straight after a session I have a protein recovery drink - it tastes like a chocolate milkshake, and that helps my body recover / rebuild quickly. I also have an electrolyte drink as well. We also go and stand in the cold water aqueducts to ice our legs. I think that is really important for recovery. Then I go home and eat breakfast as soon as possible - breakfast is my favourite meal of the day so I eat a lot then and that

keeps me going for a while. I have a physio session three times a week. I also have a rest for an hour a day where I sleep or read or just take some 'time out' because I believe that relaxation is so important in the recovery process. I stretch everyday, do core strengthening work, then it's back out for a second run. As soon as possible after finishing my second run I have dinner or something to eat. Then I'm usually in bed by 9:30 - 10:00 pm. There's not a lot to do up here when you're not running but the days generally go really quickly. I'm also doing applique sewing so I do that during the day. I'm also a sports fan so I love watching the tennis or what ever sport is on TV. I'm a person who can find it hard to relax at times so that's something I have to concentrate on if I'm to fully recover and run at my best.

N.M. How many hours sleep do you try to have?

B.J. I guess about 8 hours, but I sometimes have a nap too. I would like to sleep-in a little more but I generally wake up between 7:30 - 8:00 am. each day - not really early for the general person, I suppose.

N.M. You said that breakfast was your most important meal. What's a normal breakfast for you?

B.J. Normally I have cereal, 200 gms. yoghurt - Nestle is my favourite brand and vanilla is my favourite flavour. Then I have Cerevite with sliced apple, pink grapefruit, cashews and dark chocolate on top. I'd also drink green tea.

N.M. Is the dark chocolate your little indulgence?

B.J. Yes, I love dark chocolate. Once a week Cameron and I go out for a dessert. In Canberra we have a favourite restaurant where we order sticky date and pear pudding. I think it's important that you indulge yourself occasionally - I just can't have it all the time as running is my job and to do it well I have to be trim and taut.

N.M. You said before that you take a protein powder. Do you also eat red meat on a regular basis?

B.J. Yes, definitely and especially when I'm up here. Red meat is so important in the diet of a distance runner. I regularly eat rump steak or kangaroo. In St. Moritz we were eating ostrich which was really lean but tasty. I also eat some liver to make sure my iron stores are adequate. If you become iron depleted up here, it can take a while to recover.

N.M. A lot of people would think that it's pretty glamorous being a full time athlete although Craig Mottram said that he's spent a couple of months sleeping on the floor while racing the European Circuit. Just how glamorous is it for an athlete on the way up?

B.J. It's definitely not glamorous. When you're travelling to races you don't see much - just the hotel and the track. When we stay in London it's always with a lot of people and the houses are tiny so you don't have a lot of space. But I think you've got to look at the reasons why you're there and I really love the thrill of racing, the feeling of accomplishment when you do run well and achieve some goals. However, there are probably a lot more hard times than good times so you've really got to think about the good times when things aren't going so well. Also, getting through the tough times makes you a stronger person and a better athlete. If you want a glamorous job, try being an actor as athletics is not that glamorous. However, the highs that the sport can provide are absolutely fantastic.

N.M. What has been your greatest high so far in athletics?

B.J. I would have to say winning my first World Championship medal at the World Half - Marathon Championships in Portugal. Very few female distance runners have medalled at World Championship level so that was certainly a high for me. Just to be on the dais with Paula Radcliffe and Adere was fantastic and hopefully one day I can reach their level. The field for that race was extremely strong and to win a medal was very satisfying. But I guess that highs can come along all the time. For example, there was World Indoors in 2001 when I came sixth and that was a fantastic high because the field was really strong and I was very young and I ran that race tactically the best that I could. Personal Bests are always a high but you want to win races. At the World Championships in Paris I was really happy to run a huge personal best but I was only eighth was a bit disappointing.

N.M. Your sixth placing at the World Indoors in 2001 - was that the first race that you ran at International level that made you believe, 'hey - I can run at this level'?

B.J. Definitely. Especially, after the Sydney Olympics where I was 17th fastest over 5000 metres and missed the final by about three places. After Sydney I still thought I was nowhere near world class standard. I thought I was just a runner that could do well at an Australian level but not going much higher than that. For the World Indoors, I had to qualify in Australia first, then I actually made the final - I just couldn't believe it! Twelve make the final at the World Indoors and I came sixth! I remember calling Cameron, who was then my boyfriend, after the race and he was really emotional because he was so happy! It was then that I started to believe in myself. I then went onto World Cross-Country in Ostend and came sixth at my first attempt.

N.M. Nic is very big on 'self - belief'. Have you made this a major focus in your running?

B.J. For sure. I think that once you get to world standard, everyone's running ability is pretty similar but it's the mental edge that makes the difference between winning and losing. If you don't believe that you can beat someone, then you're not going to beat them. In the past I have lacked self-belief and have thought, "how could I beat them - I'm just this little person from Australia!" But we've got a fantastic training group and a fantastic coach so the self-belief has certainly come over the last few years. I would never say that

I'm now cocky but I'm definitely now a lot more confident. I've always been quite a fiery and aggressive person, especially when I played hockey, but now I believe that I can achieve some pretty good things over the next few years.

N.M. You have mixed with many of the super-stars of world athletics over the last few years. Which sports people do you really admire?

B.J. I would have to say Lleyton Hewitt because of his wonderful fighting spirit, his ability to win matches when it seems he is down and out and for his ability to represent his country so well - great Aussie spirit!

N.M. Benita, thank you very much for your time. All the very best for the up-coming year. Hopefully, you will be standing on that victory dais in August.

B.J. Thanks Neil. I think it will be very exciting and I can't wait.

After her fabulous win at the 2004 World

Cross - Country Championships in Brussels, I was able to briefly catch up with Benita via email.

N.M. Benita, congratulations on your fantastic win. What were your tactics going into the race?

B.J. Thanks Neil. My tactics were to run around at the front of the field for at least the first two laps, just staying relaxed with the focus on getting the first six kilometres done. The race for me was to begin on the final lap which is where I made my first move up the hill with two kilometres to go. Nic couldn't tell me exactly a point to make my move as you have to wait and see how you feel in the race and also sense how your competitors are feeling. If their breathing becomes heavier and they're looking tired, it's then that you have to push hard to try to drop them. I did this going up the first hill, then again on the second decisive hill as the two Ethiopian girls were starting to tire. I was tired too, but I thought I had to give it a go. I was hurting real bad, but I really wanted that medal. It worked and I was able to hang onto the lead all the way to the finish. Results: 1. Benita Johnson 27:17 2. E Dibaba (Ethiopia) 27:29 3. W Kidane (Ethiopia) 27:34

ANOTHER PEAK INSIDE BENITA JOHNSON'S TRAINING DIARY

In Issue 26 (May 2003), Benita Johnson let us peak inside her training diary in the lead-up to her Australian 5000 metre Record run in Berlin. This year, Benita has again opened her diary for us, revealing the training leading up to her Australian 10 000 metre Record and her bronze medal at the World Half Marathon Championships.

A two week training block four weeks out from the World Championships 10 000 metres in Paris. (Training Venue - London)

Sat. 26/7	am.	13 x 400 metres (400 metre float between) (ran in racing flats - Kingston Track) covered 10 km. in 32.20 / last 200 m. in 30.9 "Felt really good, strong all the way."
	pm.	30 mins. easy run plus circuits / stretch.
Sun. 27/7	am.	90 mins. easy run in Richmond Park. "Legs felt a bit tired so went very easy."
	pm.	Rest
Mon. 28/7	am.	50 mins. easy run.
	pm.	Massage 35 mins. easy run. Core Stability Exercises / Stretch.
Tues. 29/7	am.	38 mins. easy run.
	pm.	Track Session @ Kingston Track (in racing flats) 3 x 1600 m. (lap jog recovery between) 1. 4:44 (74, 71, 70, 68) - 'kick down' 2. 4:43 (74, 68, 74, 66) - 2nd / 4th lap 'fast' 3. 4:44 (73, 72, 70, 68) - 'kick down' "Felt good"
Wed.	am.	48 mins. easy run.

30/7	pm.	Massage. 35 mins. easy run plus drills / strides.
Thur. 31/7	am.	Session in Bushy Park on dirt trail. 1 x mile (4:57) Easy 4 mins. jog recovery. 4 x 300 metres relaxed (not timed) Easy 1 min. jog recovery. "Felt OK but not super good"
	pm.	35 mins. easy run.
Fri. 1/8	am.	Rest. Travel to Belgium.
	pm.	29 min. jog plus 5 easy relaxed strides / drills. "Felt a bit lethargic"
Sat. 2/8	am.	16 mins. easy run.
	pm.	Heitel Grand Prix Meeting. 9:05 pm. 5000 metres - 14:54 (2nd place) "Didn't feel fluent at all during race. However. good speed work leading up to World Championships 10000 metres."
Sun. 3/8	am.	Rest. Travel to London.
	pm.	90 mins. easy run in Richmond Park. "Felt fine - heat wave in London!!!"
Mon. 4/8	am.	60 mins. easy run. Core Stability Exercises / Stretch.
	pm.	Massage 30 mins. easy run.
Tues. 5/8	am.	35 mins. easy run.
	pm.	Track Session @ Kingston Park. 5 x 1200 metres. (400 metre jog recovery in\2 minutes) Ran: 3:29 3:29 3:30 3:36 - "didn't do last rep as a little tired from weekend and didn't want to push it this close to World Championships."
Wed. 6/8	am.	52 mins. easy run.
	pm.	Massage. Rest.
Thur. 7/8	am.	35 mins. easy run. Core Stability Exercises / Stretch
	pm.	45 min. Pace Run in Bushy Park using Heart Rate made up of: 15 minutes @ 165 b.p.m. 15 minutes @ 160 b.p.m. 15 minutes @ 170 b.p.m.
Fri. 8/8	am.	35 mins. easy run.
	pm.	Massage 35 mins. easy run plus Core Stability Exercises.

**A two week training block four weeks out from the World Half Marathon Championships in Portugal.
(Training Venue - London)**

Fri. 5/9	am.	72 mins. easy run.
	pm.	Rest / Stretch
Sat. 6/9	am.	Session on dirt trail in Bushy Park. 6 x 1000 metres with 90 seconds jog recovery (every second rep into wind - ran controlled in racing flats) 2:57 3:05 2:58 3:03 2:55 2:59

	pm.	Massage / Stretch 35 mins. easy run.
Sun. 7/9	am. pm.	106 mins. run. Rest.
Mon. 8/9	am. pm.	64 mins. easy run. Massage 30 mins. easy run. Core Stability Exercises / Stretch.
Tues. 9/9	am. pm.	35 mins. easy run. Session @ Kingston Track. 4 sets of 4 x 400 metres @ 70 second pace. (30 seconds recovery between reps / lap jog between sets) "Ran in racing flats and felt good - 70 second pace felt easy!"
Wed. 10/9	am. pm.	63 mins. easy run. Core Stability Exercises Massage / Rest.
Thur 11/9	am. pm.	Session on dirt trail in Bushy Park. 3 x 200 metres (33 seconds) 90 seconds recovery 1 x 800 metres (2:19) 3 minutes recovery 3 x 200 metres (33 seconds) "Felt a bit lethargic to start but better at end of session - a nice taper session." 32 minutes easy run.
Fri. 12/9	am. pm.	36 mins. easy jog plus 4 x 100 metre strides / drills. Travel to Monaco for the Grand Prix Final. Rest.
Sat. 13/9	am. pm.	13 mins. easy jog. 5000 metre race - 6th in 15:11 (led for first 2500 metres) "Felt tired, not bouncy at all, had nothing to race with, empty. Really disappointed with run!"
Sun. 14/9	am. pm.	Travel to London 105 mins. run in Richmond Park. "Felt fine." Massage.
Mon. 15/9	am.	62 mins. easy run. Core Stability Exercises. 30 mins. easy run.
Tues. 16/9	am. pm.	36 mins. easy run. Core Stability Exercises. Session @ Kingston Track in racing flats. 1 x 3000 metres - 9:14 2 mins. recovery. 1 x 1600 metres - 4:52 2:50 mins. recovery. 1 x 1200 metres - 3:30 3:26 mins. recovery. 1 x 800 metres - 2:18 "Ran relaxed, felt good."
Wed. 17/9	am. pm.	60 mins. easy run. Core Stability Exercises. 32 mins. jog. / Stretch.

Thur. am. Session on dirt trail in Bushy Park.
18/9 2 x 2.8 km. reps.
8:31 (7 minutes recovery) 8:34
"Felt very good - the best of these sessions I
have ever done!"
pm. 36 mins. jog. / Stretch.

Fri. am. 60 mins. easy run.
19/9 pm. 31 mins. easy run. Core Stability Exercises.
Massage.