



GEELONG REGION CROSS-COUNTRY TEAM NEWSLETTER



Issue # 55

<http://au.geocities.com/grxct/>

June 2007

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY ROAD RACE

Sunday 13th May

A small but determined squad of Geelong athletes celebrated Mother's Day morning by travelling to La Trobe University to contest the 15 kilometre and 5 kilometre road races around a tight, hilly and certainly challenging course. First off under still but rapidly warming conditions were the junior athletes racing over 5 kilometres. First back for Geelong was the improving Matt Williams, who ran strongly to finish tenth in a very talented age-group. In her first race for the winter season, Kate Sly showed she would again be a cross-country force, when she finished second woman overall, running a very symmetrical 18.18. Also running strongly to finish in the top ten for his age group was first year runner, Andrew Scott.



Matt Williams finishing strongly in the Under 20 5km. at La Trobe University.

After a first up win at the cross-country relays, the Geelong senior mens' team was determined to stay on top with a competitive performance. Leading the way was Geelong Team debutant, Andre La Gerche, who impressively got stronger on each of the three laps to be first Geelong athlete home in an creditable 50.47. Hot on Andre's heels was the ultra consistent Brett Coleman, closely followed by Colin Thornton and determined junior athlete, Ryan Christian, who showed his liking for longer, tougher races with a typically dogged performance. Rounding out the vital top six team finishers were David Wynn and Matt McDonough who ran conservatively to collect valuable team points.

GEELONG REGION PLACINGS / TIMES:

Open Men's Wheelchair 15 km.

Richard Colman	1 st	45.30
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Open Men 15 km.

Andre Le Gerche	20 th	50.47
Brett Coleman	24 th	51.03
Colin Thornton	25 th	51.13
Ryan Christian	27 th	51.20
David Wynn	79 th	55.57
Matt McDonough	80 th	55.59
Wes Benson	109 th	57.38
Neil MacDonald	230 th	66.03

Fastest Individual Times:

1.	M Michelsson	Collingwood	47.54
2.	T Coady	Glenhuntly	48.23
3.	A Failla	Doncaster	48.44
4.	S Field	Doncaster	48.46
5.	D Eadie	Glenhuntly	48.49
6.	D Hornery	Sandringham	48.57
7.	P Martinico	Sandringham	49.21
8.	J Atkinson	Waverley	49.27
9.	J Creswell	Glenhuntly	49.29
10.	S Stevens	Keilor St Bern.	49.36
11.	D McNeill	Doncaster	49.42
12.	B Ashkettle	Doncaster	49.43
13.	J Noonan	Inv.	49.44
14.	R Jackson	Knox	49.47
15.	L Adams	Essendon	49.47

Open Women 15 km.Cathryn Hoare 42nd 68.53**Fastest Individual Times:**

1.	S Lofts	Knox	54.10
2.	E Bell	Knox	54.53
3.	L Dick	Ringwood	56.09
4.	N Bardsley	Western Aths	56.41
5.	T Austin	Malvern	57.16
6.	M Murray	Diamond Vall.	57.51
7.	S Grahame	Collingwood	58.18
8.	M Cummins	Glenhuntly	58.25
9.	A Ziogos	Richmond	58.36
10.	M Jelleff	Malvern	58.37
11.	B Share	Keilor St. Bern	58.47
12.	S McKinney	Knox	59.13
13.	F Nash	Doncaster	59.29
14.	S Michelsson	Collingwood	59.38
15.	A Martin	Ballarat YCW	60.04

Under 20 Men 5 km.Matt Williams 10th 17.03**Fastest Individual Times:**

1.	S Crowther	Knox	15.14
2.	M Coloe	Box Hill	15.15
3.	S Kelly	Box Hill	15.17
4.	C Hamer	Box Hill	15.18
5.	M Johnsen	Doncaster	16.19
6.	N Arunasalam	Box Hill	16.21

Under 20 Women 5 km.**Fastest Individual Times:**

1.	Z Warrington	Frankston	18.57
2.	H Tomlinson	Box Hill	19.01
3.	L Stanton-Smith	Keilor St. Bern.	19.23
4.	E Aplin	Keilor St. Bern.	19.51
5.	K Duncan	Knox	20.17

Under 18 Men 5 km.**Fastest Individual Times:**

1.	L Hennessy	Glenhuntly	15.20
2.	T Fawthorpe	Ringwood	15.59
3.	D Ireland	Keilor St. Bern.	16.04
4.	S Zuliani	Frankston	16.13
5.	M Blicavs	Keilor St. Bern.	16.44
6.	K Fitzgerald	Wendouree	16.50

Under 18 Women 5 km.Kate Sly 2nd 18.18**Fastest Individual Times:**

1.	S Carberry	Doncaster	17.39
2.	K Sly	Geelong	18.18

3.	C Griffith	Knox	18.32
4.	J Booth	Doncaster	19.18
5.	M Bell	Frankston	19.28
6.	S Kondogonis	Keilor St. Bern.	19.30

Under 16 Men 5 km.Andrew Scott 7th 18.34**Fastest Individual Times:**

1.	R Gear	Essendon	16.22
2.	S Quirk	Traralgon	16.26
3.	J Nelson	Knox	17.00
4.	L Rayner	Inv.	17.17
5.	M Dowell	Box Hill	17.21
6.	L Anthony	Glenhuntly	17.50

Under 16 Women 5 km.**Fastest Individual Times:**

1.	B Gange	Doncaster	18.49
2.	D Baulch	Essendon	19.09
3.	V O'Shea	Knox	20.06
4.	J Baulch	Essendon	20.31
5.	S Brennan	Inv.	20.45
6.	S Howard	Ballarat YCW	20.55

Under 14 Men 5 km.**Fastest Individual Times:**

1.	K Mickelborough	Essendon	17.53
2.	B Quirk	Traralgon	18.53
3.	C Smith	Frankston	19.16
4.	H Bowes	Ballarat YCW	20.25
5.	J Hayes	Ballarat YCW	20.59
6.	P Sammassimo	Inv.	21.31

Under 14 Women 5 km.**Fastest Individual Times:**

1.	J Howard	Ballarat YCW	19.17
2.	A Hayes	Essendon	19.21
3.	A Burren	Malvern	20.26
4.	J Prime	Knox	21.09
5.	S Prime	Inv.	21.10
6.	N Marr	Malvern	21.45

VOTES FOR "BEST PERFORMED GEELONG REGION ATHLETES" AT THE LA TROBE UNIVERSITY ROAD RACE

Senior Men.

3. Andre La Gerche
2. Brett Coleman / Colin Thornton / Ryan Christian

1. David Wynn / Matt McDonough / Matt Williams

Senior Women.

3. Cathryn Hoare

Junior Women.

3. Kate Sly

Junior Men.

3. Andrew Scott

SANDOWN ROAD RACE

Saturday 26th May

Almost 1000 distance athletes from across Australia assembled at Sandown Racecourse for the running of the Athletics Victoria 10km. and 3km. Road Championships, where top competition, sunny skies and a light head wind up the back straight made fast times possible for athletes in great shape.



After nearly eighteen months of battling a persistent achilles injury, Richard Jeremiah was delighted to be first Geelong athlete home in the 10 km. Sandown Road Race in a P.B. time.

In the 3km. race our junior athletes performed admirably with many top ten placings. Special mention to Lewis Clark, whose fifth place in the Under 14 age - group was a fine debut run for the Geelong senior team, and Ashlea Clifton, who has shown wonderful perseverance and determination over an injury riddled last five years. Saturday's time of 11.06 was her first P.B. in that time. Well done Ashlea – there's many more P.B.'s not too far away. In the Open 10 kilometre race, Geelong's top six men finishers (Richard Jeremiah, Scott Rantall, Lee Troop, Matt McDonough, Nick Wightman and Colin Thornton) easily took out the Division One Team Competition, while the Women's Team of Kristen Wyatt, Cheryl Boness, Nadia Semjanov and Cathryn Hoare once again were highly competitive in finishing a fantastic second, behind the very strong Knox Team. Well done also to the Division Three Mens' Team of Brett Coleman, Wes Benson, Andre La Gerche, Hugh Thyer and Kevin McMahon, who were victorious in their section and have added great depth and to our senior team. On an individual note, congratulations to the following athletes who recorded personal bests at Sandown: Richard Jeremiah, Nick Wightman, Colin Thornton, Hugh Thyer, Kevin McMahon, Ryan Christian, Kristen Wyatt, Ashlea Clifton, Andrew Scott and Lewis Clark.

GEELONG REGION PLACINGS / TIMES:

Open Men's Wheelchair 10 km.

Richard Colman	1 st	26.35
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Open Men 10 km.

Richard Jeremiah	4 th	29.44
Scott Rantall	8 th	30.04
Lee Troop	10 th	30.28
Matt McDonough	17 th	31.52
Nick Wightman	35 th	31.59
Colin Thornton	44 th	32.20
Brett Coleman	48 th	32.31
Wes Benson	59 th	33.00
Andre La Gerche	61 st	33.07
Hugh Thyer	127 th	35.08
Kevin McMahon	200 th	36.56
Paul Wilson	233 rd	37.26
Neil MacDonald	412 th	41.28

Fastest Individual Times:

1.	M Shelley	Inv.	29.21
2.	D McNeill	Doncaster	29.31
3.	C Perrett	Mentone	29.39
4.	R Jeremiah	Geelong	29.44

5.	L Adams	Essendon	29.47
6.	K Gillard	Inv.	29.53
7.	B St Lawrence	Inv.	29.58
8.	S Rantall	Geelong	30.04
9.	S Moneghetti	Ballarat YCW	30.11
10.	L Troop	Geelong	30.28
11.	B Toomey	Knox	30.30
12.	M Michelsson	Collingwood	30.33
13.	T Coady	Glenhuntly	30.36
14.	S Nankervis	Ballarat YCW	30.49
15.	N Hartigan	Ballarat Harriers	30.51

Under 20 Men 10 km.

Ryan Christian	6 th	32.42
Matt Williams	DNF	

Fastest Individual Times:

1.	B Ashkettle	Doncaster	30.39
2.	C Hamer	Box Hill	30.56
3.	A Watson	Wendouree	32.14
4.	M Brown	Keilor St Bern.	32.16
5.	M Coloe	Box Hill	32.21
6.	R Christian	Geelong	32.42

Under 18 Men 10 km.

Fastest Individual Times:

1.	L Hennessy	Glenhuntly	31.46
2.	J Huggett	Ballarat YCW	32.45
3.	T Fawthorpe	Ringwood	32.52
4.	J Darcy	Knox	33.05
5.	D Ireland	Keilor St Bern.	33.09
6.	R Cowley	Glenhuntly	34.43

Open Women 10 km.

Kristen Wyatt	10 th	36.16
Cheryl Boness	19 th	37.12
Nadia Semjanov	23 st	37.23
Cathryn Hoare	56 th	42.22

Fastest Individual Times:

1.	L Weightman	Knox	33.38
2.	L Chapman	Inv.	33.55
3.	A Rizzitelli	Glenhuntly	33.58
4.	T Palm	Inv.	34.25
5.	K Jarrett	Inv.	35.10
6.	L Dick	Ringwood	35.36
7.	M Bleakley	APS	35.54
8.	K Seibold-Cros.	Sandringham	36.00
9.	L Shelley	Inv.	36.01
10.	K Wyatt	Geelong	36.17
11.	T Austin	Malvern	36.26
12.	L Furst	Knox	36.33
13.	E Bell	Knox	36.38
14.	K Dick	Doncaster	36.49

15.	S Klein	Frankston	37.06
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Under 20 Women 3 km.

Ashlea Clifton	4 th	11.06
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Fastest Individual Times:

1.	H Tomlinson	Box Hill	10.46
2.	K Duncan	Knox	10.56
3.	Z Warrington	Frankston	11.01
4.	A Clifton	Geelong	11.06
5.	S Kondogonis	Keilor St. Bern.	11.12
6.	L Stanton-Smith	Keilor St. Bern.	11.14

Under 18 Women 3 km.

Breanna Ryan	11 th	11.32
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Fastest Individual Times:

1.	M Duncan	Knox	9.52
2.	S Carberry	Doncaster	10.00
3.	G Thek	Doncaster	10.07
4.	L Hall	Essendon	10.21
5.	C Griffith	Knox	10.29
6.	K Sly	Geelong	10.41

Under 16 Women 3 km.

Georgie Buckley	4 th	11.04
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Fastest Individual Times:

1.	B Gange	Doncaster	10.48
2.	L Den Ouden	Essendon	10.56
3.	D Baulch	Essendon	11.00
4.	G Buckley	Geelong	11.04
5.	V O'Shea	Knox	11.26
6.	S McDade	Ringwood	11.33

Under 14 Women 3 km.

Fastest Individual Times:

1.	E Rayner	Essendon	10.38
2.	A Hayes	Essendon	10.47
3.	A Burren	Malvern	11.12
4.	J Howard	Ballarat YCW	11.16
5.	N Marr	Malvern	11.38
6.	R Matulis	MPA	12.06

Under 16 Men 3 km.

Andrew Scott	10 th	10.25
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Fastest Individual Times:

1.	R Geard	Essendon	9.33
2.	J Nelson	Knox	9.42
3.	S Quirk	Traralgon	9.42
4.	B De Jong	Essendon	9.54
5.	S McShane	Traralgon	9.58
6.	J Lockhead	Wendouree	10.01

Under 14 Men 3 km.Lewis Clarke 5th 10.32**Fastest Individual Times:**

1.	K Mickelburgh	Essendon	9.59
2.	L Matthews	Essendon	10.06
3.	T Temay	Williamstown	10.08
4.	J Kelly	Sandringham	10.26
5.	L Clark	Geelong	10.32
6.	J Rayner	Williamstown	10.34

**VOTES FOR
"BEST PERFORMED GEELONG
REGION ATHLETES" AT THE
SANDOWN ROAD RACE**

Senior Men.

3.	Richard Jeremiah
2.	Scott Rantall
1.	Lee Troop / Ryan Christian / Nick Wightman

Senior Women.

3.	Kristen Wyatt
2.	Cheryl Boness / Nadia Semjanov / Ashlea Clifton
1.	Cathryn Hoare

Junior Women.

3.	Kate Sly
2.	Georgie Buckley
1.	Breanna Ryan

Junior Men.

3.	Lewis Clark
2.	Andrew Scott

THE BUSH INN AWARD

The winners of the Bush Inn Award for the **Sandown Road Race** are **Ashlea Clifton** and **Hugh Thyer** for their Personal Best runs and fantastic perseverance over the last few years. Well done, Ashlea and Hugh – I'm sure you will enjoy the Bush Inn's famous food and hospitality.

A.V. TEAM PREMIERSHIP LADDERS

After three rounds of the winter season, Geelong Teams are well placed in the senior premierships. In the Division One Mens' Premiership, with two team wins and a fifth, we are one point clear on top, with strong showings over the next few races extremely important for overall winter season team success.

MENS' DIVISION ONE

1.	Geelong	13	8	13	34
2.	Glenhuntly	9	13	11	33
3.	Box Hill	10	10	10	30
4.	Doncaster	11	11	-	22
5.	Sandringham	4	7	8	19
6.	Ballarat YCW	8	1	9	18
7.	Keilor St. B.	6	9	3	18
8.	Collingwood	5	6	6	17
9.	APS	7	2	7	16
10.	Melb Uni.	2	5	5	12
11.	Knox Aths.	3	4	4	11
12.	Richmond	1	3	2	6

MENS' DIVISION THREE

1.	Bendigo	9	13	10	32
2.	Box Hill 2	13	11	6	30
3.	Ringwood	10	8	9	27
4.	Geelong 2	11	-	13	24
5.	Glenhuntly 3	7	2	11	20

WOMENS' DIVISION ONE

1.	Knox Ath.	13	13	13	39
2.	Glenhuntly	10	11	10	31
3.	Sandringham	11	7	8	26
4.	Box Hill	7	9	5	21
5.	Richmond	4	10	7	21
6.	Geelong	9	-	11	20
7.	Melb Uni.	2	8	6	16
8.	APS	6	-	9	15
9.	Keilor St. B.	1	6	4	11
10.	Essendon	5	-	3	8
11.	Eureka	8	-	-	8
12.	Diamond Vall.	3	-	-	3

AROUND THE TRACKS AND TRAILS

Geelong athletes were to the fore at the Mother's Day Classic, run around the Alexandra Gardens on Sunday 13th May. In the 8 km. event, Mark Tucker was victorious, running 24.19, ahead of Clint Perrett, with Scott Rantall third in 24.45. Fresh from recording 13.39 for a track 5000 metres in America, Jason Woolhouse comfortably won the 4 km. race in 11.16, with David McNeill (11.34) and Corey Tucker (11.53) filling the minor places. However, just to show the

battles athletes sometimes have to fight, the congestion at the start in the Mother's Day Classic meant that the fast runners had to fight their way through the crowd of 'mere mortals' during the first kilometre, then the lead bike could not keep pace with the lead runners! Where's Lance Armstrong when you need him?

Geelong Region Cross - Country Team athletes were well represented at the Great Ocean Road weekend of races. And, as you can see below, many of our athletes were in the places, earning themselves nice little cash prizes. In addition to the prize money, Julie McNamara's excellent second place in the marathon earned her a trip to Japan to contest the Senshu Marathon. Well done, Julie.

MARRINER'S LOOKOUT RUN - 6.5km.

Saturday 19th May

Men:

- | | | |
|----|------------------------|--------------|
| 1. | Willy Mwangi | 20.09 |
| 2. | Jason Woolhouse | 20.20 |
| 3. | Lee Troop | 20.27 |
| 4. | Charles Muturi | 21.06 |
| 5. | Charles Kamau | 21.34 |

Note: Steve Moneghetti's course record is 19.54

Women:

- | | | |
|----|---------------------|--------------|
| 1. | Michelle Hawkes | 27.34 |
| 2. | Eliza Eddy | 29.20 |
| 3. | Holly Lipson | 30.16 |
| 4. | Julie Jaques | 30.52 |
| 5. | Jane Barnes | 31.24 |

APOLLO BAY – PARADISE RUN - 14km.

Men:

- | | | |
|-----|-------------------------|--------------|
| 1. | Mark Tucker | 43.55 |
| 2. | Charles Muturi | 44.22 |
| 3. | Nathan Hartigan | 45.39 |
| 4. | Louis Rowan | 48.20 |
| 5. | Ryan Christian | 49.02 |
| 11. | Philip Christian | 55.14 |

Note: Richard Colman recorded 35.30 in his wheelchair.

Women:

- | | | |
|----|------------------|-------|
| 1. | Narelle Bardsley | 52.48 |
| 2. | Jodie Barker | 56.37 |
| 3. | Lucie Coutts | 59.48 |

GREAT OCEAN ROAD MARATHON - 45km.

Sunday 20th May

Men:

- | | | |
|----|-------------|---------|
| 1. | David Mutua | 2:36.33 |
|----|-------------|---------|

- | | | |
|-----|-----------------------|----------------|
| 2. | James Kariuki | 2:38.27 |
| 3. | David Wynn | 2:43.21 |
| 4. | A Richards | 2:43.52 |
| 5. | Campbell Maffett | 2:47.17 |
| 6. | Steve Moneghetti | 2:58.04 |
| 30. | Darren Riviere | 3:23.12 |

Women:

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------|----------------|
| 1. | Helen Stanton | 2:58.12 |
| 2. | Julie McNamara | 3:22.22 |
| 3. | Denise Heam | 3:22.26 |

GREAT OCEAN ROAD HALF MARATHON - 23km.

Men:

- | | | |
|-----|--------------------------|----------------|
| 1. | Willy Mwangi | 1:16.15 |
| 2. | Charles Muturi | 1:22.01 |
| 3. | Stuart Larke | 1:24.35 |
| 17. | Colin Thornton | 1:29.15 |
| 60. | Lee Troop | 1:39.50 |
| 68. | John Stekelenburg | 1:40.57 |

Women:

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------|----------------|
| 1. | Nadelle Legge | 1:30.10 |
| 2. | Nadia Semjanov | 1:33.03 |
| 3. | Cheryl Boness | 1:33.04 |

After a stint of altitude training at Flagstaff, Arizona, Craig Mottram's reign at the Healthy Kidney 10km in New York came to an end on May 20, with American Olympian Dathan Ritzenhein taking the honours and breaking the 10-year-old Central Park course record in the process. Ritzenhein, 24, claimed victory in the third annual event, crossing the line in 28 minutes, eight seconds, two seconds clear of the course record set by Paul Koech of Kenya in 1997. Mottram, the two-time defending champion and favourite coming into the event, clocked 28:25 to finish second. Australian Commonwealth Games representative **Andrew Letherby** finished eighth in 29:16. Ritzenhein took off from the start against 'Buster' and gained control of the lead at the fourth mile of the course. As Mottram closed in at mile five, Ritzenhein surged ahead again, powering up the final hill to topple the Central Park record. It was Mottram's first loss on the New York City roads after winning the first two editions of this race and the 2005 Fifth Avenue Mile. "I'm obviously disappointed with my performance, but I needed a good kick in the ass. I've had a good run here the last two years and I had expectations to live up to," explained Mottram, 26, after the race. "It's not the end of the season or the end of the world. I still ran well, I just got beaten by someone who ran better. Dathan was the

aggressor and he deserves everything he got today. The second half of the race Dathan ran a very good race."

Ritzenhein, who received US\$7,500 for first place and a course record-breaking bonus of US\$20,000, paid tribute to his peer. "Craig Mottram is a dominating figure on the world scene and the most consistent athlete I've ever beaten. I had a long layover and hadn't raced in about three months, so to finally win in New York is a great way to start off the season."

Other notable finishes in New York included: 3rd: Demesse Tefera, ETH, 28:31 4th: Chala Lemi, ETH, 28:38 5th: Richard Kiplagat, KEN, 28:41 14th: Khalid Khannouchi, USA, 30:06



A bearded Craig Mottram negotiates New York's Central Park course in the 2007 Healthy Kidney 10km. Road Race.

Also racing in America on May 20th was Georgie Clarke, who contested the 2 mile event at the Adidas Classic, in Carson, CA. In an encouraging performance, Georgie finished 4th in 9:43.53, behind Ethiopia's Meseret Defar, who smashed Regina Jacob's (possibly tainted) World Record in running 9:10.47. Georgie plans to return home in early June, when she will contest a few selected Athletic Victoria races for Geelong.

Both Georgie Clarke and Craig Mottram raced at the Reebok Grand Prix in New York on June 2nd. In the Women's 1500m. Georgie finished 13th in 4:14.72 behind the winner, Elmore Malindi of Canada (4:07.01) a week after her second place finish in Eugene, Oregon, also over 1500 metres in 4:13.19. In the mens' mile at the Reebok Grand Prix, the pacemakers took the field through splits of 57 seconds, 1:55 and 2:57 with Alan Webb and Bernard Lagat first and second entering the final lap. Heading down the back straight into the wind Craig Mottram tried to pass Webb, but the American held him off, then sprinted clear to win in 3:52.94, from Lagat (3:53.88), with Craig third in 3:54.54. In form New Zealander and 2006 Commonwealth Games 1500m. champion, Nick Willis finished 4th in 3:55.09.

Craig will return to racing when he takes on arch rival Kenenisa Bekele over two miles at the Prefontaine Classic on June 10, then there's a 5000 metre battle with World Cross Country champion Zersenay Tadesse and steeplechase world record holder Saif Saaeed Shaheen in Ostrava on June 27.

A little closer to home, Mark Tucker travelled to the Western Australian gold mining town of Leonora on June 3 for a street mile, where he finished a close second behind rising star Collis Birmingham, with Youcef Abdi third. Birmingham's time was 4.02.90 with both Mark and Abdi a few strides back.

Our junior girls were prominent at the Victorian Catholic Schools Cross-Country Championships, held at Albert Park on June 7. Well done to Georgie Buckley, who was victorious in the Intermediate Girls' 3km. race, (time: 11.34) and Bree Ryan, first place in the Senior Girls' 3km. race (time: 11.45). Holly Lipson also ran well in the senior girls' race to finish 4th.

RUNNER PROFILE

In her first season with the Geelong Region Team in 2006, Cheryl Boness impressed all her team - mates with her quietly determined, high quality running.

Extremely modest, Cheryl has been a wonderful addition to the Geelong Team and is one of the reasons our Division One Women have been so competitive over the last two winters seasons.

Cheryl Boness

School Matthew Flinders

Occupation Mum - full-time job! Fitness Trainer (part-time)

Age 40 **Date of Birth** 18 / 3 / 67

Height 172 cm. **Weight** 61 kg.

Married Husband Tim. Married 10 years.

Coach ? I get lots of advice from training partners.

Personal Bests

10000m. 37.04 (but that was 20 years ago!) **Note:** Cheryl ran an excellent time of 37.12 at Sandown a few weeks ago!

Half Marathon I ran 1 hour 25.10 for the half marathon distance in the 2007 Great Ocean Road Half - Marathon on the way to a 1 hour 33.03 finish time.

Favourite Food Good quality dark chocolate.

Food Eaten Before a Race Bowl of cereal, piece of toast, take-away Skinny Capuccino.

Favourite Drink Red Sparkling "E & E" Don't get to drink it often so when I do it's a treat!

Favourite Movie "Braveheart"

Favourite Book Don't have a favourite but I love a good thriller.

Favourite Music / Band "Hoodoo Gurus", "Paul Kelly", "The Pogues", "Little Bird"

Favourite TV Show "Lost", "Amazing Race"

Favourite Night Spot My home

Favourite Holiday Spot "Lorne, Thredbo"

A Normal Training Week.

I don't have set sessions - most of my running pace is determined by how I feel: if tired I run slow / if feeling good, I run a faster.

Mon. am. 60 minute recovery run.

Tues. am. 3000m. swim **or** 40 - 50 minute run

Wed. am. 60 minute run over hills.

Thur. am. 60 - 70 minute run.

Fri. am. 60 minute recovery run.

Sat. am. Hill session: 20 minute warm-up / 20 minutes hills / 20 minute cool-down.

Sun. am. 90 minute run over hills (You Yangs)



Cheryl Boness running strongly in the 2006 Cross-Country Relays at Yarra Bend.

Other Training / Recovery Sessions.

"I mainly swam before becoming involved in running. I still do the odd 3km. swim if the legs are sore."

Favourite Training Session "At present the long run at the You Yangs - some of my running partners will think I'm stupid!"

Favourite Race "Mountain To Surf" - it starts on a hill - it's very tactical - you need to run the opening hill hard to get a good position on the single lane track."

Best Ever Performances "2007 Mountain To Surf" (6th overall / 1st over 30 female). 2006 Athletics Victoria 8 km. at Jells Park (12th overall).

Favourite Place To Train "The Lorne to Cumberland River Trail. I also love Bells Beach / Iron Bark Basin".

Toughest Ever Training Session / Race “The 11.5km. run leg of the Anaconda Adventure Race (over rocks and up and down hills) was really tough and I usually find the Sunday long run at the You Yangs very challenging (although my training partners might call me a wimp!)”

Most Admired Runners / People “Lee Troop and Nadia Semjanov”.

Advice to Other Runners “Enjoy the endorphins that running can provide”.

Goals for the Future

“To run a marathon. This has been a life-time goal.”

CRAIG MOTTRAM – “THE BIG MAZUNGO”

To much of the world, he's known as “Buster”. But the Kenyans call him, “The Big Mazungo” (“The Big White Man”). Craig Mottram has gained the hard-earned respect of the formidable Africans through his confident manner, his fearless racing style, his results and his belief that he can challenge and beat them. The morning, after his emphatic victory over the highly credentialed Kenyan, Boniface Songok at 5000 metres in the 2007 Melbourne Track Classic, I spoke to Craig at the Book Talk Café in Richmond about the last twelve months and his plans for the future.

N.M. Craig, congratulations on your win last night. At this stage of the year, were you happy with how the race went and how you ran? (Ed. Off a muddling first 4 kms. Craig won in 13:32.67, running the last 600 metres in 1:24, (despite surging at 550 metres) the last 400 metres in 54 seconds and the last 200 metres in 26 seconds. Boniface Songok was second in 13:36.67)

C.M. Yes, the race was good last night. We just wanted to win first and foremost and to get through it without falling over. I'm probably not as fit as I have been but I'm certainly getting better at certain things that need to be improved for this year.

N.M. Obviously, against the very best you need to be able to race to your strengths but also be able cope with what the best might throw at you. What tactics and strategies are needed to beat the best Africans?

C.M. There are a lot of ways to beat them. If you are good enough, you can wait and wait, then out kick them or you can surprise them and try to establish a gap. However, you have to do it in certain ways. Last night I went with 550 to go, then again with 220 to go. The initial surge at 550 established a gap that Boniface was able to close but he wasn't able to respond when I went again at 220. In some races I might need to go at 900 out or 1100 metres out or maybe even further. In last year's Commonwealth Games 5000 metres I tried to go from about 1 km. out but then it was more of a wind-up rather than really wacking-in a hard surge. The gradual wind-up didn't work against Choge, so maybe, a more sudden change of pace is needed. I've got pretty good speed endurance, and while it might take a little longer for me to get up to top speed, I can hold it for a good distance, which a lot of the Africans don't like.

N.M. Do you practice these change of pace tactics in training?

C.M. No, it's something that has just developed. I haven't done anything much on the track since the World Cup except for the two indoor races in Boston and New York and the 3000 metres in Sydney a couple of weeks ago. We don't tend to do much on the track. Instead, I did the Quarters Session at Falls Creek last week, and I suppose that is a change of pace session in that you have to stop, turn and pick up the pace again at the end of the aqueduct turn-around points. The ability to change pace just comes from the strength derived from lots of the right sort of training.

(Ed. However, at the appropriate time, Craig will go to the track to rehearse tactics or strategies that may be used in upcoming races, as can be seen in the following excerpt from Nic Bideau's enlightening paper, “Coaching Middle and Long Distance Runners: A Commentary” Modern Athlete and Coach Volume 44 Number 3 July 2006.

“Closer to the big race, these type of workouts (interval or repetition training on the track) often mimic planned strategies due to be employed in a race whilst surrounding it with volume to ensure aerobic fitness is still maintained. Before the Melbourne Commonwealth Games 5000 metres, Mottram ran a series of 3 x 1600 metres. The first one was done in 4.20 (basically what we felt was around 10 000 metre race pace for him or more specifically, the slowest we could imagine the Commonwealth 5000 metres race being run at inside the last 2km.) The 2nd rep was to practice the tactic, which we hoped could take him clear of the Kenyans in the Melbourne 5000m. His training partner, England's Mo Farah, ran the first lap in 65 seconds before Mottram went to the lead, running the second lap faster, the 3rd lap faster again and once more increasing the pace on the last lap. He ran those last three laps in 59, 58 and 57 seconds for a final 1600 metre time of 3.59. He then eased back to 4.20 again for the 3rd rep and finished the workout by cruising 4 x 200 metres at 1500 metre race tempo with an easy 200 metre jog recovery. We felt he was ready for Ben Limo, and he was. But unfortunately for us, Augustine Choge had something else.”)

N.M. Talking of Falls Creek, straight after your Sydney 3000 metres, you went up there.

C.M. Yes, I had nine days at Falls Creek.

N.M. And what did you do to prepare for the Melbourne Track Classic 5000 metres?

C.M. Just normal stuff, nothing too complicated. I did kilometre reps on the Tuesday - 8 x 1000 metres, Quarters on the Thursday and a longer threshold effort at Fitzy's Hut on the Saturday. Then I did a long run on Sunday and backed-off on Monday and Tuesday. I drove back to Melbourne on Tuesday night. We didn't want to do too much because, firstly, I had to recover from the Sydney race, and doing that at altitude is more difficult, and I had to be right for the race in Melbourne, so we had to be careful and not overdo things. Also, I haven't been to altitude since the middle of December because of the bushfires. Usually, I spend 10 - 12 weeks at altitude over the Australian summer and this summer it has only been four weeks. But I'll go to altitude in America in May and the year will continue on from there.

N.M. The last time I was at Falls Creek you held the unofficial record for the Quarters session. What is the record now?

C.M. A lot faster than it was back then! It's 14.30 now.

N.M. At altitude and with the stop - start on each end, that's pretty impressive.

C.M. Yeah it's good going. I could probably run it quicker but that's not the point of the session. I was running the 400's in

about 65 seconds and the 'floats' around 43 - 44 seconds. If you wanted to run the quarters in 66 and keep the 'floats' at 38 you'd run the session much quicker but the point of the session is to run the 400 metre sections 'fast', keep moving, then accelerating up to speed out of the bends. It's also about accumulating some lactic acid, which you don't often get at Falls Creek because of the altitude and varied terrain.

N.M. You've had many stints at altitude now, both at Falls Creek and overseas. Do you think that over time the body adjusts more quickly and that the benefits are accumulative?

C.M. I don't find any problems going to Falls Creek. I puff hard and whatever but I can run 1 km. reps in 2.40 and quarters in 65 seconds. The only difference is that the recovery time is a little longer at Falls Creek. Running 1 km. reps at altitude I might have a minute recovery, whereas down here, I'm ready to go after 30 seconds. But I'm getting better and better. I've been to St. Moritz, which is 1800 metres above sea level, and Laguna, which is the same height. Falls Creek is the lower end of altitude training at about 1600 metres but the difficult terrain at Falls Creek makes up for that as it's so much more challenging than anywhere else in the world. But Falls Creek is still the best place in the world to train.

N.M. And it's so relaxing up there?

C.M. Yes, it's very quiet – probably too quiet sometimes but it allows you to train hard, recover well and get the job done. The people up there are also so friendly and it's only four hours from Melbourne. It's not as far as many people think.

N.M. There are the traditional Falls Creek sessions such as Fitzy's Hut, Langford's Gap, the Pretty Valley long run etc. but have you developed any sessions that are Mottram - esque, like a Mottram's Hut or Buster's Bash?

C.M. No, there's not a Mottram's Hut but we do a variation of Fitzy's Hut. We go along the aqueduct, up the normal way then come back down Marms Point because the hill is not on the bluestone, then we continue back along the aqueduct at pace for 15 minutes. So we get 5 minutes up the hill, 8 minutes across the snow plain, about 6 - 7 minutes of downhill, then 15 minutes along the aqueduct. Including the warm-up, the run takes about 70 minutes. 68 minutes is the record for that run. That course is much more conducive to the type of running I'm doing than trying to negotiate the down hill on the blue stone near the start of Spion Kopje. There is another run that I'm keen on where you go along the aqueduct, surge up Marms Point continue across the top of the snow plain, jog down from Fitzy's Hut to the aqueduct and then you have about 23 minutes of pace running along the bottom. At Falls Creek the important thing is that the Saturday run is made up of 30 minutes of easy running followed by 30 - 40 minutes of solid pace running.

N.M. Do you use your heart rate monitor at Falls Creek to control the effort?

C.M. Oh yeah no higher than 180 beats per minute ever at Falls Creek. My heart rate can go well over 200 beats per minute – I've had it as high as 211, but there's no point in doing that as it would take too much out of you. So my Falls Creek maximum is 180, but I do most of my Falls Creek harder training at 165 – 175 beats per minute.

N.M. What is your resting heart rate?

C.M. Probably about 35 beats per minute first thing in the morning.

N.M. You say you haven't been doing any track sessions and that your fast finishes are due to the great strength you

have developed, but are you still doing the regular sprint drills and fast / relaxed strides session?

C.M. Yes, every Monday and Friday night, we do those to keep the fast twitch fibres ticking over. At Falls Creek we do them along the aqueduct above the village but wherever I am in the world, I do that session twice a week. At Falls Creek the distance would be maybe 80 metres but the important thing is to regularly get the legs turning over quickly with good form. In fact, the drills are probably more important than the strides as they are emphasising good sprinting form and biomechanics. You have to practice it because, as you saw last night, at some point in a race, you need to be able to run fast.

N.M. If all else is equal, the fastest runner wins the race.

C.M. That's right, but you also need strength at the end and really believe that you can win.

N.M. Have you raced Boniface Songok before?

C.M. Yes, I beat him after the World Championships in 2005 in Sheffield over 2 miles. Last year he beat me twice – once in London and once in Monte Carlo.

N.M. Let's go back twelve months to the Melbourne Commonwealth Games. Competing in front of 80 000 supporters must have been a huge thrill?

C.M. Yes, and one of the scariest things I have ever done!

N.M. Was the roar from the crowd spine - tingling?

C.M. Oh yeah it was. But I was quite relaxed as I stood on the starting line because I knew I was ready to go. In training I had done a few things that surprised me and surprised Nic, so we knew I was in great shape and the Kenyans couldn't get rid of me, it was just a case of whether my race plan and how I carried it out was good enough to win. And I did that pretty well. It was just that one guy was too good on the night. But it was a fantastic experience. The final call room was under the stadium in the Richmond Football Club change rooms, and when we walked up onto the MCG, you could hardly see the sky, it was that packed with people in the massive stands. I was actually really looking forward to being introduced to the crowd, because there was a hush in the crowd just beforehand, then the huge roar and it was an indication of the support for me. And as I said, I was really calm and relaxed then, because I thought, 'Well I've done the work, I've run 5k before, I'm quite good at it and all I have to do is do what I know I can do and let it happen'. And I did. And I tried my arse off but ?

N.M. The look on your face just after you crossed the line seemed to say ... "that's as good as I could do tonight – Augustine Choge was just too good". Would that be a fair summation of your thoughts? (Ed. Kenya's Augustine Choge won in 12:56.41. Craig was second in 12:58.19, running the last 1000 metres in an eye - popping 2:28)

C.M. 100% correct. He just blew me away. Even if I had been with him in the home straight he was accelerating all the way to the finish. He ran a great race and he's a really nice guy. I'd love to say that if I had raced differently that night I could have won, but I truly believe that no matter what, he would have won on that night. But that's not to say that I won't beat him next time!

N.M. Let's go to the 1500 metres. What were your plans?

C.M. My plans were pretty common knowledge. We wanted 60 seconds for the first lap, 58 seconds for the second lap, then with 700 metres left, I was going to go. And everybody knew that at some stage I was going to take off because Nick Willis of New Zealand was the main person I was concerned about and if it came down to the last 300 metres off a slower pace, he would be dangerous. So, I was going to do something similar to last night pour it on pour it on pour it on, and break him. And

I knew in my heart and mind that if I could get to the front at that point without a problem, that he would struggle to keep up. But, I just never got that chance, which was very frustrating. The actual fall was not any one person's fault, it was more a comedy of errors that started initially because the pace was not on. The first lap was 61, then a 60 meant that the field was banked up from the slow pace, waiting for me to go. Also, people on the rails didn't want to be there when I went, so there was pushing and shoving to get out. Eventually, a couple of runners at the rear pushed Kevin Sullivan, who tripped Andrew Baddeley, who fell onto me. Unfortunately, Andrew Baddeley has been seen as the villain but he was unlucky as I was.

N.M. Sounds like the domino theory?

C.M. Exactly. Looking back, it's kind of funny, but it wasn't funny then!

N.M. Straight after the race, I thought you handled a very difficult situation perfectly by disappearing into the change rooms to collect your thoughts. Obviously you were very hot under the collar, but if there was a film crew inside the change rooms, what would we have seen?

C.M. First of all, many people asked me why I got back up and started chasing and finished the race, but all I knew was that I was there to run 1500 metres the best I could, and that thought was all I took onto the track. Also, there wasn't an exit where I fell, so I guess that wasn't really an option. Anyway, I finished the race and sought out the winner, Nick Willis. He seemed to be kneeling on the track, praying and I said, 'well done' to him, then quickly disappeared inside. And I was angry. I think I bashed a fridge and kicked a chair, I couldn't get my spikes off as my hands were shaking so much. A doctor came over to help with the spikes but I told him to go away. Understandably, I was not happy, but you can't show those emotions in front of all those people. So I let off a bit of steam, quickly got changed, then went back out and spoke to everybody who was out there.

N.M. I'm sure you won a lot of admirers for going back out.

C.M. Yes, I suppose. I could have done the interview straight after finishing but I was still unsure of what had really occurred so the interview might have been me just shaking my head in a state of disbelief.

N.M. And, perhaps you may have said something that you'd later regret?

C.M. Possibly, but I'm generally OK in those situations, although that was certainly one of the more difficult situations to handle. In the end, I thought I was able to deal with it all right.

N.M. There's an old sporting saying that goes: "You win with class and you lose with dignity", and you certainly did that at the Melbourne Cricket Ground in both your races.

C.M. After the 5000 metres I received a letter from John Howard saying that he was there for the 5000 metres and that it was a fantastic race and that I ran a great race yadda, yadda, yadda. Then after the 1500 I got another letter from John Howard saying that I'd run a fantastic 5k but the way I'd handled myself after the 1500 was one of the greatest things I'll ever do in my career. That was great. It didn't give me the gold medal, but it was nice to hear that from the Prime Minister. Anyway, I've let it go and have moved on.

N.M. After running a sub 13 minute 5000 metres in a race described by Steve Ovett as the greatest Championship 5000 metres he had witnessed, how did you back up for the 1500 metre heat three days later?

C.M. In the heat of the 1500 I felt unstoppable, I was flying and I wish the final was that day! I ran 3.37 and felt like I was

jogging, it was that easy. It was fun and I felt so relaxed and it felt so, so easy. In the final of the 1500 it was difficult to say how I had recovered as the first two laps were slow and nothing had really happened. Had I taken off and there was nothing there well, that might have happened, but I don't think so, as I was confident and in really good shape. After the 5000 metres I went home, had dinner, got up next morning and went for a jog and ended up at the Kerford Road Pier. I went walking in the water to help the recovery and a couple of policemen turned up. They were patrolling the waterfront but there was absolutely nothing going on down there, so they said they'd watch my shoes for 10 minutes while I was in the water, even though there was not a person within kilometres of my shoes. And then when I walked over to the track, the police stopped the Punt Road traffic so I could walk straight across – it was amazing the buzz and hype surrounding the Melbourne Commonwealth Games and I'm sure that attention won't happen again in my career.

N.M. You did a session at the Llanberris Track in Ballarat a few weeks before the Commonwealth Games. Apparently, you had been feeling a little weary in training, but on this day, everything seemed to fall into place. I understand you ran a 1000 metre time-trial, followed by 5 x 300 metres and 1 x 200 metres. Can you remember the session?

C.M. It was two weeks before the Commonwealth Games and just before the Melbourne Meet where I ran 2000 metres. The main thing I remember about the session was running the 200 with England's Mo Farah to finish and we ran through in 24 high and I was cruising, just chatting to Mo as we ran, and I knew then that I was on and ready to go. Then, two days later, I ran 4:50 for 2000 metres at Olympic Park to break the Australian Record, running 56, 56 for the last two laps. In fact, that 2000 metres was probably my greatest ever run - 4:50 is not mucking around. (Ed. Craig ran 4:50.76 to smash Simon Doyle's 12 year old Australian Record by 10 seconds)

N.M. And even though you were 'flying', you didn't look ragged. You looked as though you were working hard but under control?

C.M. Yeah, that's the way it felt. I really started to work the last 120 because I went really hard with two laps to go, but I was relaxed, I was tall, I was strong, I was smooth, but you need to fight like hell over the last 120 in every race.

N.M. In hindsight, did the emotional build-up for the Commonwealth Games and the need to be in top form in March flatten you for three or four months afterwards?

C.M. Yeah, perhaps? I went to World Cross but did not run very well there. (Ed. Craig ran the 4 km. Short Course Race and finished 11th) I got sick after the Commonwealth Games. After the 1500 metre fall, I went out and partied, then jumped on a plane the next day to fly to Japan. Basically, I had not been to bed for three days but still, six days after the Commonwealth Games, I was lining up to race the World Cross - Country. Looking back, I wasn't really into it and at that level, you have to be 100% mentally switched on. I really wanted to run this year's World Cross-Country in Mombasa, Kenya in March because I wanted to atone for the run in Japan but, when Nic and I had thought about the situation and the pros and cons, it was not the best option. Once I had my couple of months of just jogging around in London, physically I was alright, and mentally, I was getting better and better and I was able to come up for the last couple of races of the European summer.

N.M. After a couple of disappointing races in Monaco and Brussels, where you close to 'pulling the pin' on running the 3000 metres at the World Cup in Athens? (Ed. on August

20 Craig ran the 3000m. in Monaco, finishing 15th in 7:47.88 behind Abraham Chebii - 7:33.42. On August 25 at the Van Damme Memorial Meet in Brussels, Craig finished 17th over 1500m. in 3:38.75, behind Mehdi Baala - 3:32.01)

C.M. The last few months leading up to the World Cup were tough. I was on and off. I'd had a few bad sessions and didn't really know if I wanted to go to Athens and run because I wasn't sure that I'd get a good result. Also, I really struggled in the Monaco and Brussels races. In those races I thought I was going all right and then you're really trying to go and you can't! It was very frustrating because the results didn't make much sense to me at the time. Mentally, it was really hard because you're just trying to hang on and survive and not make a fool of yourself in front of all those people. Also, when you're running against the best athletes in the world and you're not quite right, you're terribly exposed – you don't want them to see you struggling because it gets into their minds that perhaps you're not super after all. But I didn't want to finish the year on such a bad note after the Brussels race. I was also team captain and defending World Cup champion, so in the end we decided to go to Athens and show everyone that I'm the athlete I want to be. One or two bad races does not make you a bad athlete. Everybody goes through these down periods. What makes you a better athlete is how hard you bounce back. The worst thing to do was to jump on a plane and fly home with your tail between your legs. It would have been much harder to bounce back from that!

N.M. And you just went back to basics in your training?

C.M. Yes. We went to St. Moritz, did the normal sessions in London, not much on the track but plenty of what works for me.

N.M. Nic said that before your winning 3000 metre World Cup race, you tuned-up with some 60 second strides on grass

C.M. Yes, some minute reps on the grass ovals around Bushy Park in London. Actually, I backed-off for the World Cup and a few days before the race, I did a few 200 metre reps in Athens, nice and easy, just rolling 28 - 29 seconds that felt so easy, just like I wasn't trying. You know sometimes in the lead-up to a race when you're ready, and they can throw anything at you, and they would not be able to drop you. It's just a matter of racing smart and making it to the finish line first. And that's a great feeling!

N.M. Bekele was a late entry for the 3000 metres. How did this change your tactics?

C.M. A couple of days before the race we heard that Bekele was switching from the 5000 metres to the 3000 metres. Initially, I was going to retain the same tactics as I used in Madrid for the last World Cup and run from the front. However, with Bekele in the field, Nic and I decided to settle in for four to five laps behind him, see what he did, then unleash whatever I had left with 950 metres to go to run the kick out of Bekele. If the pace was slower, I was hoping for 1.51 for the final 800 metres. Fortunately, Bekele ran a pretty solid pace for the first few kilometres, which dropped the rest of the field. This was what we wanted so it was just the two of us racing. Eventually, I went with 900 metres to go, then we slowed up a bit and I went again with 500 metres to go. Then I felt him on my shoulder and went again and tried to stay alert. I'd learnt at the Commonwealth Games that once you let them get past you, it's hard to get the lead back, so you can't let anyone past. With 200 metres to go I could see on the big screen that I had five metres on him and thought, 'this is unbelievable!' Then I went again around the final bend and knew it was all over. I was then able to really enjoy the final 50 metres.

N.M. After you surged away from him to win the World Cup 3000 metres, did Bekele come up to you and say anything?

C.M. Aaahh he's not the friendliest of fellows.

N.M. Is he shy or has he got a touch of arrogance about him?

C.M. I've got a touch of arrogance about me. Everybody who is good needs a touch of arrogance. No, he's alright, he's just a little misunderstood and doesn't speak English very well. He might well be shy. He did come up and say 'well done', then quickly left. But, he would have been annoyed because he was expecting to win and had a guy stalking him in the early part, then smashing him over the last lap.

N.M. And without his Ethiopian mates, he is more vulnerable.

C.M. Well yeah he may have done better with some other people to assist with the pace, but that's the beauty of those sort of races, where it's athlete versus athlete. It's like last night. You can play with them fast ... slow ... fast ... slow ... let them come past ... run them wide ... move in on them. They hate it ... they hate it ... but they know now that I'm now able to race in a variety of situations and I can take it up to them.

N.M. And after the race, you received an unexpected surprise on the athlete's bus.

C.M. Yes when I boarded the athlete's bus at the stadium to return to the hotel, some of the world's best athletes, including Sanya Richards, (winner of the 200 metres / 400 metres at the World Cup) stood up and gave me a clap and a pat on the back. (Ed. But the plaudits did not stop there. On reaching his hotel, former World Record Holder and Olympic Champion, Steve Ovett sought out Craig to offer his congratulations. And at the World Cup Gala Dinner, Craig was greeted by Lord Sebastian Coe, who stood on his chair and bowed to Craig.)

N.M. You've raced some of the all-time greats in your career – athletes like Haile Gebrselassie, Hicham El Guerrouj and Kenenisa Bekele. How would you sum up each of them?

C.M. I never raced Haile when he was at his absolute best, but he just refuses to give in. He's just one very tough, determined b#@&*%#. In London, when I broke 13 minutes for the first time, he just hung on and hung on, then willed himself past me. I reckon I'd beat him now as I've improved and he's not the runner he once was, but in my eyes he's probably the best-ever. Bekele is great too, unbelievably good, but he just doesn't have the aura that Haile possesses. He's not as friendly as Haile, he's not warming up with everyone, they are not going to make a movie about him like they did with Haile. And El Guerrouj, he's just a really nice guy. And very hard to beat – super fast, super strong. I'd be more worried about El Guerrouj being in my final than anyone else, because, I reckon I could beat Haile now and I reckon that Bekele has 'dogged it' a couple of times when he's been under intense pressure, he can be broken. He's probably one of the greatest ever but Bekele has shown a couple of chinks in his armour. But El Guerrouj is different, even the races when he has been beaten, like the 2000 Sydney Olympic 1500 metre final or the 2003 World Championship 5000 metres, he's fought to the death but he's never exposed himself with a weakness.

N.M. Do you think that it's been a privilege to race in an era with three such great champions?

C.M. For sure. And hopefully, when other athletes finish their careers, they can say that it was a privilege to race against me. I suppose I have looked up to the likes of Gebrselassie, Bekele and El Guerrouj in the past but now that I'm racing them I don't

any more as I believe I'm at their level and they're beatable. But in five years time there's going to be new athletes doing what they're doing and you're going to be doing this interview with Collis, maybe (Ed. Collis Birmingham) and asking was it a privilege to race some African we haven't heard of or me or whoever? The sport is always changing and new fast guys are always appearing. Sure it's a challenge to race Gebrselassie or Bekele or El Guerrouj but a few years ago it was Daniel Komen.

N.M. One of your stated goals is to hold all the Australian Records from 800 metres up to the marathon. (Ed. These are the current Australian Records)

800 metres	1:44.40	Ralph Doubell
1000 metres	2:16.61	Grant Cremer
1500 metres	3:31.96	Simon Doyle (C.M. 3:33.97)
Mile	3:48.98	Craig Mottram
2000 metres	4:50.76	Craig Mottram
3000 metres	7:32.19	Craig Mottram
5000 metres	12:55.76	Craig Mottram
10 000 metres	27:31.92	Shaun Creighton (C.M. 27:50.55)
Half Marathon	60.02	Darren Wilson
Marathon	2:07.51	Rob de Castella

N.M. Already you have quite a few of them ticked off.

C.M. Yes, I do and I think the others are gettable too. At the moment I hold National Records in the mile, 2000 metres, 3000 metres, 3000 metres road (Craig's 7:41.70 is also a World Best time), 5000 metres, 5000 metre road and 10 000 metre road. However, I obviously need the opportunity to prepare properly for the different distances, then race them. Simon Doyle holds the Australian Record for the 1500 metres at 3:31 high but I've been through 1500 metres in 3.32 during a mile race.

N.M. Would the 800 metres be the toughest?

C.M. What is the exact time?

N.M. Ralph Doubell's 1:44.40 set at altitude at the Mexico City Olympics?

C.M. That would be tough to get.

N.M. But you have run 1:45.9 in training.

C.M. That's right I'm sure I could run 1:44. It would not be easy, but I could do it.

N.M. What's your P.B. for 400 metres?

C.M. Don't know. Never run one but I reckon I could run 48 high, 49 low. I'll do it this year for you ... how about that! Ha Ha Ha.

N.M. Perhaps you'd better run that past Nic first! When you ran the 1:45.9 in training, what did you go through half-way in?

C.M. Aaah 52 high to 53 seconds, so it was even pacing.

N.M. In a race where you are hoping to run 1:44 or faster, you would need to go through half way faster than 53. Could you cope with that?

C.M. I could cope with 51 high.

N.M. And then come storming home a la Borzakovsky?

C.M. I could do it? When I ran the 1:45.9 in training it was at the end of the session and I'd already run 10 x 200 metres in 28 - 29 seconds with 30 seconds recovery. I then had a reasonable recovery, put the spikes on and ran the 800. However, I did hurt my hamstring a few days after that!

N.M. And what about the marathon?

C.M. Yeah, I'll get that first go.

N.M. You think you can run faster than 2:07.51 first up?

C.M. I reckon I will run 2:06.50 first go. No, not really.

N.M. Have you got one pencilled in?

C.M. No, not yet. Seriously though, the marathon time is a good one. The marathon is a very special race. I've seen some very good runners close to me, who were absolutely flying in training, go to pieces in the marathon. You race the event and that's what makes it tough. I could say I'm going to run 2:06 first up but look at guys like Gebrselassie and Tergat – two great runners and they have at times struggled to get it right in the marathon. It's just a tough, tough event, so it won't be that easy. Fortunately, I've got some great people in my corner: Garry (Henry) knows a lot about the marathon. I reckon that if you gave me six months from today to prepare, I could run 2:08.30 – 2:09.00 but to take another minute off that would be tough. Also, I've got quite a bit of unfinished business at the shorter distances. I've seen a few runners move up in distance and run the marathon only to have great difficulty regaining the running times they once had on the track over the shorter distances. However, one day I'd love to run the marathon – perhaps the 2012 London Olympics would work in well.

N.M. What is your long run at the moment?

C.M. One hour 45 minutes.

N.M. This year you and Nic have decided to back-off the training a little to prepare for Beijing. So what does that mean, training wise?

C.M. A maximum of 170 kilometres a week with a minimum 130 - 140 kilometres. It will be up and down a little depending on whether I'm racing or not, but I'll probably average 150 - 160 kilometres a week, which is not a hell of a lot, but enough to stay injury free and put some kilometres in the bank. Obviously, the World Championships is important this year (Ed. Craig will contest the 5000 metres.) but we want to get through the next twelve months without any setbacks, because I want to win the Olympics in Beijing. At the moment, a lot of people are pushing harder and harder but I'm backing off a little now so that I'm in great shape for later this year and next year. The World Championships in Osaka will be a great 'dress rehearsal' for Beijing in 2008 as it has many similar factors, such as time zones and weather conditions. Osaka will also give us a chance to check-out a final training camp in Asia.

N.M. You mentioned Garry Henry before. What role does he play, because he's almost a constant in your athletic career now?

C.M. Yes, Garry is there every day. I call him the 'goat' but he's great. He keeps me calm, he's great company and he oversees the training I do when Nic is not around, because Nic can't always be with me as he has a family and other athletes. I guess you could say that he's Nic's eyes and ears on the ground. If I'm tired Garry knows me well enough to back off the training. If anything, he holds me back. I just feel more comfortable training with Garry beside me on his bike than running with anybody else. I just seem to be able to find the right rhythm and run at the correct pace, and I think that is so important. I reckon too many athletes get swept up in running too fast at the wrong times in training. People come to train with me from England and Ireland and all over the world, because they think that what I do is going to make them great. When I was developing as an athlete, no one told me how to be great, you have to figure that out for yourself. I can't help people be great. They can watch my work ethic and the way I train and the sessions I do, but that's not enough – it's the mental approach and the belief that can be so hard to pick up.

N.M. And perhaps the confidence in yourself and your program so that you know when it's sensible to back-off the training?

C.M. Yes, and you can feel that. I didn't run on Wednesday evening this week. I drove back from Falls Creek on Tuesday and Nic had on my program to run Tuesday morning / evening and Wednesday morning / evening, but I rang Nic on Wednesday evening and said I wasn't running and Nic said 'good'. I felt tired and didn't feel like a run was going to be of benefit. I know that you can't get fit for a race on Friday by running on Wednesday evening. If you're tired, all you will do is make the tiredness worse. So I went for a walk down to the beach, sat on the sand for 10 minutes, went for a walk in the water, relaxed, went home, went out for coffee, then watched the new 'Rocky' movie, and basically took it easy and had confidence in the training I had already done. Some people, would be out there running, doing strides or drills trying to get fit for a race in two days time – it just doesn't make sense.

N.M. I heard that some of the top Australian junior male athletes went for a run with you after the Zatopek and they couldn't believe how slow you run on some of your easy days?

C.M. Yes, it was at Yarra Flats. And I do run slowly some times. But, the difference is that I know that if they want to push it, I can keep up. However, if I want to push it, they won't keep up. So I don't need to prove anything when I go for a run. I can do the right session for me at the right pace.

N.M. Craig, once again, thank you very much for your time and all the best for the up-coming European summer as you build up for the Osaka World Championships and the Beijing Olympics.

C.M. My pleasure, Neil.

CRAIG MOTTRAM'S 2006 SEASON

March 9	Telstra A Series 2000m. 1 st place 4:50.76 Australian Record. 8 th fastest time in history
March 20	Melbourne Commonwealth Games 5000m. 2 nd place 12:58.19
March 25	Melbourne Commonwealth Games 1500m. 9 th place 3:44.37
April 1	IAAF World Cross-Country Championships 4km. 11 th place 11.10
July 19	Liege, Belgium 3000m. 1 st place 7:32.84 Australian Record
July 28	IAAF Super Grand Prix, London 5000m. 7 th place 13:08.96
August 18	IAAF Golden League, Zurich 1500m. 5 th place 13:33.97 Personal Best
August 20	2006 Super Grand Prix, Monaco 3000m. 15 th place 7:47.88

August 25	IAAF Golden League, Brussels 1500m. 17 th place 3:38.75
September 17	IAAF World Cup, Athens 3000m. 1 st place 7:32.19 Personal Best / Australian Record / Championship Record / Oceania Record.
September 30	Newcastle / Gateshead Great North Road Race 3000m. 1 st place 7:41.70 Personal Best / World Best time. Defeated 2003 World 5000m. Champion Eliud Kipchoge and broke 16 year old World Best time set by Morocco's Brahim Boutayeb (7:49)

FINALLY, THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING FOR THEIR FANTASTIC SUPPORT OF THE GEELONG REGION CROSS-COUNTRY TEAM

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