



GEELONG REGION CROSS-COUNTRY TEAM NEWSLETTER



Issue # 58

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

September 2007

PRESENTATION ARVO / NIGHT

Sunday 7th October.

4:00pm. - 5:00pm.

Elephant and Castle Hotel

158 McKillop Street Geelong

Please put Sunday 7th October in your diary now so that you can wind-up the 2007 Winter Cross-Country Season in style with your team mates.

We will be starting with a few drinks / nibbles, before trophies / awards will be presented to our best - performed winter season athletes. Then, those wishing to stay for a meal can do so.

Could you please notify Neil MacDonald of final numbers by Thursday 4th October.

ATHLETICS VICTORIA BURNLEY HALF MARATHON

Sunday 9th September

A small, but talented band of Geelong male athletes contested the Burnley Half Marathon under favourable conditions around the undulating Yarra Boulevard course. Leading the way from the gun was Geelong's dual Olympian Lee Troop, who was after a solid hit-out three weeks before the Berlin Marathon. While Lee's time of 64.20 was 3 minutes off his best, he was aiming to replicate his desired Berlin Marathon pace, where a sub 2.12 clocking will qualify him for his third Olympics. On leaving for Berlin, Lee commented that he was in great shape and looking forward to testing himself now that he is finally over the countless injury 'niggles' that have plagued him over recent years. All the best, Lee.

Making it a Geelong quinella at Burnley was Rowan Walker, whose time of 66.01 was a PB and a great confidence booster leading into next month's Melbourne Marathon. Following in quick succession were Brett Coleman (5th), Colin Thornton (6th), and Andre La Gerche (7th), who all recorded personal best times for 21.1km. With our top five finishers in the first seven athletes to complete the course, the Geelong Team comfortably took out another team victory. Well done guys!

Paul Wilson and Kevin McMahon also ran very strongly in excellent Melbourne Marathon trials, while

endurance specialist David Wynn is returning to peak fitness after an extended holiday overseas.

Geelong Results:

Open Mens' Half Marathon (21.1 km.)

Lee Troop	1 st	64.20
Rowan Walker	2 nd	66.01
Brett Coleman	5 th	70.26
Colin Thornton	6 th	70.28
Andre La Gerche	7 th	70.30
David Wynn	35 th	76.00
Kevin McMahon	88 th	80.48
Paul Wilson	90 th	80.53



Rowan Walker ran a Half Marathon PB at Burnley in an excellent Melbourne Marathon trial.

Fastest Times:

1.	L Troop (Geelong)	64.20
2.	R Walker (Geelong)	66.01
3.	M Michelsson (Collingwood)	68.00
4.	A White (Box Hill)	68.24
5.	B Coleman (Geelong)	68.26
6.	C Thornton (Geelong)	68.28
7.	A La Gerche (Geelong)	68.30
8.	A Rickards (APS)	70.36
9.	D Angus (APS)	70.37
10.	J Atkinson (Waverley)	71.03
11.	J Kuppler (Glenhuntly)	71.39
12.	S Kelly (Box Hill)	72.13
13.	B Norman (Diamond Valley)	72.15
14.	J McKenzie (Traralgon)	72.40
15.	D Locke (Morningside Pen.)	72.47

Open Womens' Half Marathon (21.1 km.)

Fastest Times:

1.	A Thompson (Glenhuntly)	77.38
2.	M Bleakley (APS)	77.50
3.	K Dick (Doncaster)	78.55
4.	T Austin (Malvern)	80.35
5.	K Natoli (Knox)	81.33
6.	M Cummins (Glenhuntly)	84.50
7.	B Cardy (Knox)	85.10
8.	K Jackson (APS)	86.07
9.	J Petrie (Ringwood)	86.12
10.	A Martin (Ballarat YCW)	86.47
11.	K Seibold-Crosby (Sandring.)	87.36
12.	M Szirom (Ringwood)	87.39
13.	S Prosenica (Essendon)	87.46
14.	A Harper (Box Hill)	88.10
15.	B Dennett (Glenhuntly)	88.39

VOTES FOR "BEST PERFORMED GEELONG REGION ATHLETES" AT BURNLEY HALF MARATHON

Senior Men.

3. Lee Troop
2. Rowan Walker
1. Brett Coleman, Colin Thornton,
Andre La Gerche

THE BUSH INN AWARD

The winner of the Bush Inn Award for the Burnley Half Marathon is **Colin Thornton** for his excellent debut season with the Geelong Region Cross-Country Team and his PB run around Yarra Boulevard. Well done, Colin - hoping you enjoy the Bush Inn's famous food and hospitality.

GEELONG MEN SECURE FIRST PREMIERSHIP AT TAN RELAYS

Saturday 22nd September

Magnificent spring weather greeted Geelong athletes as they gathered at the world famous Tan Track for the final race of the 2007 Athletics Victoria Winter Season. However, enjoying the sunshine was furthest from the minds of our athletes as all were extremely keen to finish the Winter Season on a high.

In the Division One Mens' race around the 3.827km. course, all six of our runners broke 12 minutes in a determined team display. However, Box Hill's team of talented track specialists were a little too strong, eventually winning by a few hundred metres, with Geelong second and Glenhuntly third. Mark Tucker's time of 11.04 was the fastest individual split of the day. After the race, it was a proud group of athletes who collected the Division One Mens' Premiership pennant, thus breaking Glenhuntly's amazing run of ten consecutive team premierships. But with seven wins, two seconds and a fifth placing for the season, the Geelong Mens' Team were certainly a dominant force in only our seventh year in the best domestic winter competition in Australia. Well done to the following athletes who all scored valuable team points for the Division One Mens' Team this year: Wes Benson, Ryan Christian, Brett Coleman, Richard Jeremiah, Andre La Gerche, Matthew McDonough, Scott Rantall, Louis Rowan, Brenton Rowe, Colin Thornton, Lee Troop, Mark Tucker, Rowan Walker, Nick Wightman and David Wynn – great work guys - you were all fantastic!



Colin Thornton, David Wynn, Andre La Gerche, Mark Tucker, Nick Wightman, Scott Rantall, Neil MacDonald, Wes Benson, Brett Coleman and Ryan Christian, decked out in magnificent new Premiership T Shirts, proudly display the Division One Premiership Pennant.

Well done also to our Division Three Team at the Tan Relays, who finished a close second, while our Division Six Team of Ashlea Clifton, Andrew Scott, Tim Kilfoyle and Graeme Watkins scored a convincing victory. Interestingly, the total age of the Division Six Team was 101 years, with the evergreen Graeme Watkins accounting for more than half of those years! Great to see a wise veteran guiding the fast young legs to a fine win!

After an excellent winter of consistent high placings back in Division One, the Geelong Womens' Team of Cathryn Hoare, Julie McNamara, Emily Rooke and Kristen Wyatt again teamed well at the Tan Relays, thus finishing a highly creditable fifth for the winter season – well done girls!

In the Under 20 Womens' Relay, Bree Ryan, Holly Lipson and Georgia Scott ran well to finish second.



Bree Ryan tags with Holly Lipson in the Under 20 Race.

Well done also to Lee Troop, who was named the Champion Senior Male Winter Season Athlete for 2007 – great work, Lee!

Finally, a special thank-you to Bea Lipson and Chris Sly for their wonderful assistance as time-keepers at the Tan Relays and to Chris Sly, who piloted the Geelong Team bus to Melbourne throughout the season.

GEELONG RESULTS:

Division 1 Men (6 x 3.827 km.)

- | | | |
|----|---------------|-------|
| 1. | Louis Rowan | 11.38 |
| 2. | Nick Wightman | 11.52 |
| 3. | Mark Tucker | 11.04 |

- | | | |
|----|----------------|-------|
| 4. | Colin Thornton | 11.47 |
| 5. | Scott Rantall | 11.17 |
| 6. | Brett Coleman | 11.57 |

Second Place: 69.34

First place: Box Hill 68.55

Division 3 Men (5 x 3.827 km.)

- | | | |
|----|-----------------|-------|
| 1. | Wes Benson | 12.05 |
| 2. | Hugh Thyer | 13.04 |
| 3. | Andre La Gerche | 12.05 |
| 4. | Ryan Christian | 12.15 |
| 5. | David Wynn | 12.30 |

Second Place: 61.59

First place: Box Hill 61.01

Division 6 Men (4 x 3.827 km.)

- | | | |
|----|----------------|-------|
| 1. | Ashlea Clifton | 14.30 |
| 2. | Andrew Scott | 13.57 |
| 3. | Tim Kilfoyle | 13.19 |
| 4. | Graeme Watkins | 13.43 |

First Place: 55.39

Second place: Glenhuntly 57.30

Fastest Individual Splits – Male Sub 12.30:

- | | | | |
|-----|-------------------|------------------|-------|
| 1. | M Tucker | (Geelong) | 11.04 |
| 2. | B Toomey | (Knox) | 11.10 |
| 3. | S Crowther | (Knox) | 11.11 |
| 4. | L Adams | (Essendon) | 11.12 |
| 5. | A White | (Box Hill) | 11.15 |
| 6. | S Rantall | (Geelong) | 11.17 |
| 7. | K Wille | (Knox) | 11.23 |
| 8. | A McGregor | (Nunawading) | 11.25 |
| 9. | D Clark | (Box Hill) | 11.27 |
| | C Hamer | (Box Hill) | 11.27 |
| 11. | M Coloe | (Box Hill) | 11.31 |
| | D Ruschena | (Glenhuntly) | 11.31 |
| | D Hornery | (Sandringham) | 11.31 |
| 14. | S Dineen | (Box Hill) | 11.32 |
| 15. | L Rowan | (Geelong) | 11.38 |
| 16. | R De Highden | (Doncaster) | 11.40 |
| 17. | D Huffer | (Glenhuntly) | 11.42 |
| | J Creswell | (Glenhuntly) | 11.42 |
| 19. | B Lynch | (Box Hill) | 11.43 |
| | J Kuppler | (Glenhuntly) | 11.43 |
| 21. | A Wilson | (Glenhuntly) | 11.45 |
| 22. | C Thornton | (Geelong) | 11.47 |
| 23. | J Matthews | (Sandringham) | 11.48 |
| | S Austin | (Richmond) | 11.48 |
| 25. | T Popplestone | (Eureka) | 11.50 |
| 26. | N Wightman | (Geelong) | 11.52 |
| 27. | L Delany | (Melb. Uni.) | 11.54 |
| 28. | A Patti | (Doncaster) | 11.55 |

	J Atkinson	(Waverley)	11.55
30.	R Gleisner	(Ballarat YCW)	11.56
31.	B Coleman	(Geelong)	11.57
	B Norman	(Diamond Valley)	11.57
33.	S Cook	(Glenhuntly)	12.00
34.	S Fitzpatrick	(Essendon)	12.02
	D Locke	(Mornington Pen.)	12.02
	K Grimster	(Frankston)	12.02
37.	M Griffin	(Eureka)	12.03
38.	A Vincent	(Box Hill)	12.04
39.	B Chefnaoui	(Box Hill)	12.05
	W Benson	(Geelong)	12.05
	A La Gerche	(Geelong)	12.05
	R Schwerkolt	(APS)	12.05
43.	M Johnsen	(Doncaster)	12.07
	S Williams	(Waverley)	12.07
45.	M Fedmowski	(Mentone)	12.08
46.	A Diorietes	(Box Hill)	12.10
	D White	(Essendon)	12.10
48.	L Kearney	(Doncaster)	12.11
49.	M Seen	(Knox)	12.13
	C Bridge	(APS)	12.13
	L Gloster	(Glenhuntly)	12.13
	K Craigie	(St Stephens)	12.13
	M Michelsson	(Collingwood)	12.13
54.	W Power	(Doncaster)	12.14
55.	A Rickards	(APS)	12.15
	D Verwey	(Frankston)	12.15
	R Christian	(Geelong)	12.15
	J Huggett	(Ballarat YCW)	12.15
59.	N Van Raaphorst	(Ballarat YCW)	12.16
	T Wallace	(Mornington Pen.)	12.16
61.	W Audy	(Glenhuntly)	12.17
	P Simm	(APS)	12.17
	T Carroll	(Williamstown)	12.17
64.	J Meagher	(Box Hill)	12.18
	P Boxshall	(Box Hill)	12.18
	M Poli	(Box Hill)	12.18
	L Toomey	(Knox)	12.18
68.	J Murphy	(Collingwood)	12.20
	S Townsend	(Essendon)	12.20
	M Blicavs	(Keilor St. Bern.)	12.20
71.	L Keely	(Bendigo)	12.22
	D Rowle	(Frankston)	12.22
	H Beaumont	(Melb. Uni.)	12.22
	T Longmuir	(Doncaster)	12.22
	M Carr	(Doncaster)	12.22
76.	C Kealy	(Collingwood)	12.27
77.	A Wilson	(Glenhuntly)	12.28
78.	D Wynn	(Geelong)	12.30
	J Wagstaff	(St Stephens)	12.30
	J Grey	(Coburg)	12.30

M Stapleton	(Essendon)	12.30
K McCarthy	(Glenhuntly)	12.30

Division 1 Women (4 x 3.827 km.)

1.	Cathryn Hoare	15.57
2.	Julie McNamara	15.14
3.	Emily Rooke	14.25
4.	Kristen Wyatt	14.05

Seventh Place: 59.42

First place: Knox 53.46

Under 20 Women (3 x 3.827 km.)

1.	Bree Ryan	14.35
2.	Holly Lipson	15.47
3.	Georgia Scott	15.17

Second Place: 45.40

First place: Keilor St. Bernards 44.27

Fastest Individual Splits – Female Sub 14.45:

1.	L Weightman	(Knox)	12.33
2.	S Michelsson	(Collingwood)	12.50
3.	A Worland	(Eureka)	12.54
4.	M Daniliuk	(Sandringham)	13.06
5.	S Lofts	(Knox)	13.10
6.	K Seibold-Crosbie	(Sandringham)	13.14
7.	K Dick	(Doncaster)	13.25
8.	M Bleakley	(APS)	13.26
9.	S Lund	(Glenhuntly)	13.31
	F Nash	(Doncaster)	13.31
11.	S Braahkus	(Melb. Uni.)	13.33
12.	E Gangelhoff	(Essendon)	13.41
13.	L Dick	(Ringwood)	13.42
14.	G Thek	(Doncaster)	13.45
15.	K Natoli	(Knox)	13.52
16.	M Murray	(Diamond Valley)	13.55
17.	E Jackowski	(Knox)	13.56
	T Bird	(Glenhuntly)	13.56
19.	K Tour-May	(Glenhuntly)	13.59
20.	H Tomlinson	(Box Hill)	14.00
21.	T Fraser	(Ballarat YCW)	14.01
22.	K Wyatt	(Geelong)	14.05
23.	K McKnight	(Knox)	14.06
	S Carberry	(Doncaster)	14.06
25.	B Thomas	(Essendon)	14.08
26.	A Hayes	(Essendon)	14.13
	T Austin	(Malvern)	14.13
28.	S Grahame	(Collingwood)	14.19
29.	E Aplin	(Keilor St. Bern.)	14.21
30.	E Rooke	(Geelong)	14.25
31.	J Edwards	(Glenhuntly)	14.26
	M Cummins	(Glenhuntly)	14.26
	A Harrison	(APS)	14.26

34.	J Jellert	(Eureka)	14.27
35.	J Keely	(Bendigo)	14.28
36.	L Biffin	(Eureka)	14.29
37.	B Dennett	(Glenhuntly)	14.30
38.	E Rayner	(Essendon)	14.31
39.	B Cardy	(Knox)	14.34
40.	J Petrie	(Ringwood)	14.35
	B Ryan	(Geelong)	14.35
42.	J Norney	(Ringwood)	14.36
43.	C Griffith	(Knox)	14.38
44.	J Hawkes	(Wendouree)	14.40
	B Gange	(Doncaster)	14.40

ALL-TIME FASTEST TAN TIMES

Men:

1.	Craig Mottram	10.08	2006
2.	William Chirchir	10.19	2003
3.	Noah Ngeny	10.22	1999
4.	Luke Kipkosgei	10.26	1999
5.	Bob Kennedy	10.29	1998
6.	S Moneghetti	10.41	2003
7.	Lee Troop	10.42	2003
8.	Grahame Hood	10.45	1998
9.	Martin Keino	10.45	1998
10.	Michael Hillardt	10.47	1983
11.	Moses Kiptanui	10.48	1997
12.	Mark Tucker	10.49.4	2005

Women:

1.	Sarah Jamieson	11.57.9	2005
2.	Kate Anderson	11.58	1996
3.	Haley McGregor	12.07	
4.	Anna Thompson	12.12	2003
5.	Georgie Clarke	12.12.1	2002
6.	Claire Fearnley	12.14	2000
7.	Anne Cross	12.24	1991
8.	Carolyn Schuwalow	12.26	1995
9.	Susan Michelsson	12.33	2000
10.	Lisa Weightman	12.33	2007
11.	Kate Seibold-Crosbie	12.40	2003
12.	Julia Edwards	12.56	2004

VOTES FOR "BEST PERFORMED GEELONG REGION ATHLETES" AT THE TAN RELAYS

Senior Men.

3.	Mark Tucker
2.	Scott Rantall
1.	Louis Rowan / Colin Thornton / Nick Wightman

Senior Women.

3.	Kristen Wyatt
2.	Emily Rooke
1.	Ashlea Clifton

Junior Men.

3.	Tim Kilfoyle
2.	Andrew Scott

Junior Women.

3.	Bree Ryan
2.	Georgia Scott
1.	Holly Lipson

THE BUSH INN AWARD

The winners of the Bush Inn Award for the Tan Relays are: **Chris Sly** for his continued fantastic support of the Geelong Region Team and his expert driving of the Team Bus to events and **Sue Buckley** for keeping our web page up-to-date. Thank you, Chris and Sue - hoping you enjoy the Bush Inn's famous food and hospitality.

AROUND THE TRACKS AND TRAILS

Five Geelong Region Cross - Country Team athletes travelled to Perth to contest the Australian Cross - Country Championships and Australian All - Schools Cross Country Championships on Saturday 1st September.

Open Men's 12km.

1.	J Hunt	NSW	37.10
2.	B St Lawrence	NSW	37.12
3.	M Dent	ACT	37.17
8.	Scott Rantall	VIC	38.14
	Mark Tucker	VIC	DNF

Open Women's 8km.

1.	A Thompson	VIC	27.20
2.	L Weightman	VIC	27.43
3.	E Stewart	NSW	28.15
18.	Kristen Wyatt	VIC	31.15

Under 20 Women's 6km.

1.	L Tamsett	NSW	22.43
2.	G Lacaze	QLD	23.07
3.	L Clarke	TAS	23.19
25.	Holly Lipson	VIC	28.04

Under 16 Women's 4km.

1.	K Perkins	QLD	14.06
2.	C Sullohern	NSW	14.24
3.	R Bennett	QLD	14.34
27.	Georgie Buckley	VIC	15.36

Also in Perth on the first weekend of September, but for the Australian Road Walking Championships, was the versatile Daniel Payne. Daniel contested the U18 8km. race and finished 5th in 39.53.

On Sunday 9th September, Scott Rantall travelled back to his home town to contest the Warrnambool Half Marathon. Scott used the race as preparation for October's Melbourne Marathon, so ran a threshold run the day before, then ran for an hour before the race with an extended warm-up. Even so, Scott recorded a very smart time of 67.51 to win by 7 minutes.

Also on Sunday 9th September, Mark Tucker was one of more than 23 000 entrants for Adelaide's City to Bay Fun Run over 12km., held under ideal conditions.

1.	Michael Shelley	34.19
2.	Martin Dent	34.21
3.	Mark Tucker	35.42

In the woman's race:

1.	Anna Thompson	39.30
2.	Lisa Weightman	40.04
3.	Sarah Lofts	41.12

Two weeks after the disappointment of Osaka, Craig Mottram contested the 1500 metres at the Berlin Golden League Meet (Sept 16). Craig finished 13th in 3:40.93. The race went to Kenyan Daniel Kipchirchir in 3:34.09 from 1500 / 5000 metre World Championship gold medallist, Bernard Lagat (3:34.79).

Then, on September 22nd, Craig lined up for the 3000 metres at the World Athletics Final in Stuttgart, where he finished a close fourth in 7:49.89, behind Kenyan winner, Edwin Cheruiyot (7:48.81), Joseph Ebuya (7:49.70) and sometime training partner, Mo Farah (7:49.89). In the next couple of weeks Craig will head home for a well earned rest and a chance to recharge the batteries.

RUNNER PROFILE

Local school - teacher Kristen Wyatt has been working solidly over the last 18 months as she puts in the necessary work to take her running performances

closer to her potential. However, both Kristen and coach, Lee Troop will tell you that there is still quite a lot of improvement ahead as Kristen strives to reach her goals. Crikey, she has even come to appreciate (enjoy?) cross - country running as a fantastic endurance / strength tool for those hoping to run a fast marathon.

Kristen Wyatt

Occupation Teacher

Age 28 **Date of Birth** 16 / 11 / 78

Height 169 cm. **Weight** 58 kg.

Married / Single Single

Coach Lee Troop

Personal Bests:

1500m. 4.47 (set when I was 15, so it's well overdue to improve!)

3000m. 10.28

5000m. 17.39

10000m. 36.17

Half Marathon 82.00

Marathon 2 hours 55.



Kristen Wyatt contesting the 2007 Victorian Cross-Country Championship at Bundoora.

Favourite Food Mum's lamb roast.
Food Eaten Before a Race Powerbar
Favourite Drink Sustagen
Favourite Movie "The Shawshank Redemption"
Favourite Book "???"
Favourite Music / Band "U2"
Favourite TV Show "Grey's Anatomy".
Favourite Night Spot Anywhere with good food and wine.
Favourite Holiday Spot Mooloolaba in Queensland.

A Normal Winter Training Week.

Mon.	am.	50 - 60 mins.
	pm.	Pilates
Tues.	am.	Easy 20 - 35 mins.
	pm.	Mona Fartlek – either the 13 minute version or the full 20 minute session.
Wed.	am.	50 - 80 mins.
Thur.	am.	Easy 20 - 35 mins.
	pm.	Track Session – usually 'Quarters'. (6 x 400m. with 200m. 'float'.)
Fri.	am.	35 – 50 mins.
	pm.	Pilates
Sat.	am.	Hill Circuit at Eastern Park.
	pm.	Easy 35 mins.
Sun.	am.	90 - 120 mins.
	pm.	Easy 35 mins.

Other Training / Recovery Sessions.

"Regular deep-tissue session with Shane Hamill and a weekly massage".

Favourite Training Session "You Yangs long run"

Favourite Race "Any marathon"

Best Ever Performances "Sandown 10km. PB of 36.17 for 6th Victorian. Finishing second in the Senshu Marathon."

Favourite Place To Train "You Yangs."

Toughest Ever Training Session "Cement Works Hills – we ran up 5 times with a jog down recovery"

Most Admired Runners / People "Mum and Dad"

Advice to Other Runners "Always appreciate your ability to be active and run".

Goals for the Future

"To run a really big PB in my next marathon".

Anything else?

One of my most challenging sessions was at Falls Creek over last summer. My 90 minute long run turned into a 3 hour 40 minute effort due to me becoming lost in the high country in thick fog, rain and extremely cold conditions. Eventually, I made it back to camp, where Troopy was almost suffering from hyperthermia too. Overall, a most eventful morning!

BUSTER IN OSAKA

The week after the 5000 metre final at the Osaka World Championships, Craig Mottram explained what happened in the Herald Sun (Thursday 13th September).

I have to admit to a lie.

I know everyone back in Australia has been wanting to know what happened to me in the 5000m. World Championships. Well, here it is I was injured.

I'm not hiding from the fact that I finished 13th. I have to live with that. I have to cop it on the chin and I know that is the beauty about sport – sometimes it doesn't go the way you want it to.

But what I am doing here is admitting to a lie and providing some facts which played a part in the Osaka disaster.

The training mishap which everyone saw thanks to an SBS camera crew being present in London on the eve of the World Championships wasn't just a hamstring spasm as my coach Nic Bideau said.



I actually tore my right hamstring. Within 24 hours of doing it, I had flown to Ireland for intensive treatment with renowned physiotherapist, Gerard Hartmann. He said it was a three week injury, but with the World Championships starting the next week, I needed a miracle.

He worked on me for four days before I was allowed to go for a 20 minute jog. But it still felt sore and I stayed in Ireland for another three days before flying out to Japan on the Wednesday. The semi-finals of the 5000m were on the following Thursday.

We decided not to tell the truth about the injury because we knew it would snowball. I needed to try to move on, forget about it, focus on getting to the start line and not be answering questions about it every day.

I knew I couldn't go into the Championships saying my hamstring was no good and I don't think I can win because then you actually give yourself no chance.

I still had to go in there believing I could do it. Nic always thinks that in every situation and he has instilled that in me.

Once at my Japanese base in Chiba, we decided that D-Day for the hamstring was on the Sunday when I would do my first track session since the incident in London. Nic reported to everyone that the session had gone well, but in reality, well meant that I had actually got through it. There was nothing mind-blowing about it – I just made it around without doing the hamstring again. It did give me some confidence because I didn't want to go to Osaka and start in the semi-final and have to pull up after four or five laps.

All I wanted to do was race as best I could in a sticky situation.

We also thought that the hit-out in the semi-final might actually bring my fitness forward for the final which was three days after on the Sunday, the final night of the meet.

Unfortunately, I knew after the semi-final, where I finished fourth, that I was in trouble. I was forced to work very hard in that race, when in normal circumstances, I would have cruised through.

But I still tried to stay positive. When I stood on the start line for the final I was mentally ready to run the best I could and I knew that if I could do anything near that, I would be in the mix.

But that didn't happen. I was embarrassed running those last couple of laps but there was nothing I could do. I was trying but I just couldn't go. I didn't have the gears, the ammunition I would have liked to have had and it showed. The key sessions we missed had left me powerless and my fitness had dropped dramatically.

Plus, my body hadn't been given the chance to adjust to the heat and humidity. Just a couple of weeks earlier I had been wearing beanies and gloves in Ireland. Not exactly the ideal preparation, so in

hindsight it is no real surprise that my body didn't have time to adjust.

I have always said that 99 per cent of the battle in winning these Championship races is getting to the start line physically fit and mentally ready to race, and I didn't do that. But I can accept that, because we did everything we could.

I know I've copped criticism for it because I was one of the favourites given how I'd beaten most of those guys during the year in Europe.

That's fine. I can understand that but the perception from some commentators that I am too confident, that I didn't deliver again and had been talking myself up is crazy.

To be an elite athlete you have to have confidence. I have never stood up and said I am going to win this or do this against the Africans. I am not that stupid. I have always said that I am going to try to win and try to do the best I can. That's not arrogance – that's self-belief.

It still hurts now, but I have to move on. The facts are that I didn't get to Osaka in the condition I wanted to be in. I can't be sure that it won't happen again, but what I am going to be doing is try my best to be in a position in Beijing next year to live up to my ability and we'll see what that brings.

**FINALLY, THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING FOR
THEIR FANTASTIC SUPPORT OF THE GEELONG
REGION CROSS-COUNTRY TEAM DURING 2007**

CORIO BAY SPORTS MEDICINE CENTRE

**TONY STEWART AND
"THE ATHLETES FOOT"**

CRAIG GODDARD AND SUBWAY

THE CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

**TONY & PAULA KELLY AND
"THE BUSH INN HOTEL"**

GEELONG ATHLETICS INC.

Please support the above businesses and organisations. And don't forget to say that you're from the Geelong Region Cross-Country Team whenever you use their services.