

THE SPARTAN

Reg No A0043579R

CLUB PATRON - Robert de Castella

January 2017

Email: spartans.team@hotmail.com**Website:** www.melbournemarathonspartans.com**Postal:** P.O. Box 162., Rosanna Vic 3084

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hi Spartans,

Well we've cracked open another new year in this heat which on occasions has had a fair bit of bite to it. I hope you've all had a wonderful time with your loved ones over the Christmas break and are refreshed and ready to enjoy the exciting challenges that a fresh period of time brings. Hence the timeless tradition of making new year's resolutions resulting from reflection and evaluation brought about by lounging around and relaxing with a full belly of yummys. The vast majority of people's resolutions involve the 2 major goals of improving health and improving work-life balance. These two are quite connected to each other as they both involve trying to wrestle back some of our time from the vice-like grip of outside forces so that we can spend it as we would wish to spend it and increase our own joy and fulfilment, without feeling guilty or selfish about it. It invariably involves saying no to some of these demands on our time so that we can say yes to ourselves and I wish each and every one of you the best in shifting that balance back in your favour in 2017. This is a topic close to my heart as I have started the year by resigning from the ludicrous demands of my teaching position yesterday and am very excited about the prospect of a more balanced life in 2017.

The Melbourne Marathon turns 40 this year and Spartans turn 30 so we would love to mark the milestone by making this whole year as one of unification and visibility. We will be presenting initiatives that are designed to unify us as a group which isn't that easy as we are strewn so far and wide. We also wish to further raise our visibility and presence as a group of individuals dedicated to a common goal both here in Oz and also overseas. While we are certainly not the only club of our type in the world, there aren't exactly all that many of them, particularly clubs that have been around as long as we have and managed to survive and grow with a readily recognisable identity. I think it's also fantastic that we have kept the bar for entry into Spartans at 10 Melbourne Marathons because it makes it enough of a challenge to aspire to, but by no means unachievable, even though only a relatively small percentage of Melbourne Marathon entrants go on to become Melbourne Marathon Spartans. This is what makes the singlet and the club so special and we really should be making a bigger deal of it so that even more runners are inspired to aim for 10.

At this point, I would like to pay homage to Melbourne Marathon Spartan Legend Neville Gardner for his grit and determination on running last year's event at all, let alone missing the 7 hour cut-off mark by a measly 4 minutes. Neville had an extremely difficult year by any measure and only really committed to running the 2017 marathon on the night of our AGM at the MCG. I was about to pay tribute to him from the podium as he had all but confirmed that he wouldn't be a starter at last year's event, but on the night he was so inspired by our incoming CPEC Spartans Tate Kemp and Brenton Ponza that right there and then he committed to run the next month. Well done Nev for the brilliant teeth-gritting determination and it just shows how powerful inspiration can be whether we inspire others or are inspired by others.

Neville's departure from the fold leaves us with 7 runners who can rightly lay claim to being a Spartan Legend. As their ranks dwindle further we are currently drafting some initiatives as to how we proceed in honouring the final man/men standing and, subsequently how the Spartan categories might look going forward after that, in name and composition to recognise these fine achievements. We will be presenting our consensus of views on this to members and we will be as consultative as possible with all members during this evolution of our club.

Additionally, while we recognise that many Spartans are members of several other running clubs, with their own commitments and running calendars, I again extend a warm invitation to any Spartans who are able to make it on the first Saturday of every month to The Tan for a bit of a gallop and coffee. Please join us in your Spartan singlet at the Victorian Road Runners Tan Time Trial on Saturday February 4, 7:30 AM on Birdwood Avenue starting opposite the Shrine of Remembrance. I have made the VRR run on the first Saturday of every month a permanent fixture and it's always great to briefly catch up with members and their inspirational recoveries or upcoming adventurous travel plans for interstate or overseas events. Happy sweating!

Jay Fleming (S1012)

39 Marathons in 2019?

There were six runners prior to the 2016 run who had finished 37 Melbourne Marathons. Ian Campbell, Bryan Flegg, Charles Harcoan, and Dennis Nish completed their 38th and we look forward to them (and Nev Gardner) bringing up 40 in 2018 – no pressure guys!

Richard Tann did not start, bringing to an end his streak. Through the "Tann Clan" Richard inspired many Ballarat runners to train for and enter the Marathon.

Antony Martin (88 years young) started late because of car problems and was slowed by injuries suffered earlier in the year. He completed the 42.2 kms in 7h31m but was not classified as a finisher.

WARNING

A tiny number of runners are manipulating results in qualifying marathons to become eligible for entry to events such as the Boston Marathon. Melbourne Marathon results are analysed to detect anomalies whether deliberate or accidental. Offending runners are excluded from the results.

It greatly saddens the Melbourne Marathon Committee to report that two members of the Spartan community have been subject to these provisions.

FROM THE SECRETARY

At the moment we don't really have a secretary and are looking for someone to fill the position. Felicity Doolan has been an exemplary secretary since 2014 but is now sometimes unable to attend committee meetings due to increasing family commitments. The role includes preparing Agenda for and minuting Committee Meetings as well as production of this newsletter which comes out about five times per year, monitoring emails received, maintaining lists of new Spartans, and those achieving milestones. The new Secretary will ease into the role as Felicity and other committee members are currently sharing the various tasks.

Anyone interested can be sure of support from Felicity and members of the committee. They can also be assured that they are contributing to the wellbeing of an exceptional group of people in the Spartans. If interested please contact President Jay Fleming on 0418 374 783 or Spartans.team@hotmail.com.

If you don't feel that you'd like to be secretary but would like to be involved, Jay would also love to hear from you.

<http://melbournemarathonspartans.com/committee/> has details of the current committee members.

PHOTOGRAPHS SOUGHT

Do you have any photographs from the 2016 Melbourne Marathon that you would like to share? Please identify the Spartan and provide a few words of description. We will publish a selection on the website. (We cannot accept official race photographs.) Send to djfoskey@ozemail.com.au

MILESTONES – LET US KNOW!

If you are going to run your 10, 15, 20, 25, 30 or 35th Melbourne Marathon in 2017, we would like to hear from you so we can acknowledge your milestone! Remember that you can purchase your Spartan singlet to run your milestone marathon. Please email: spartans.team@hotmail.com.

Presentation to Honorary Spartans

Members of the Committee were invited to the Cerebral Palsy Education Centre Christmas drinks, an event held to thank CPEC supporters and volunteers. Treasurer Rod Bayley and Committee Member David Foskey attended and took the opportunity to present Brenton Ponza with his formal membership certificate. (Tate Kemp wasn't able to attend.) Brenton had a big year winning the Victorian junior disability sports person of the year award just the day before. The family are also passionate Western Bulldogs supporters.



We handed over a cheque for the donations made before the AGM. We learned that the cost of a year at CPEC is \$32,000 and the government contribution is \$7,900. Numerous groups support CPEC in many ways, with some very significant donations. Bruce of the Balmoral Retirement Centre won the Victorian Premier's Volunteer of the Year – Channel 9 News did a wonderful story on the work that these gentlemen perform.

Importantly for Melbourne Marathon runners, CPEC families, friends and staff provide 400 volunteers on race day. See here: <https://cpec.org.au/news-events/2016-melbourne-marathon/>

WINNERS

More lucky prize winners were drawn at our recent Committee Meetings:

September: Kevin Gray S1058
October: Rob Gilbert S1213
November: Pamela Young SF0093

Remember you have to be a financial member to be eligible for prizes!

THRESHOLD

On Sunday 16 October 2016 I ran my eleventh Melbourne Marathon; my first as a fully-fledged Spartan. We all have different reasons for running and taking on the marathon challenge. My first was run in memory of a young boy who had lost his battle with a rare metabolic disease, as were the following nine and as the eleventh will also be.

The night before each marathon, I have sewn a memorial 'In loving memory of Callum' onto my singlet. I text his mother from the start line and she rings me in the afternoon to find out how I went. We don't speak his name or recall his life out loud, the unspoken is more powerful.

A threshold takes you from one place to another; it is a point of entering or beginning; where stimulus is strong enough to be perceived or to produce a response; it is any limit or quantity beyond someone's tolerance or at which something occurs. Loss is like this, and so is running.

The following experience was the beginning of *my* marathon journey:

The Intensive Care Unit is filled with still children. Some of them are broken; others have been opened up and closed again. Callum is one of the still, until a convulsion pushes through the coma and forces his small body into an arch. He rises and falls intermittently.

My arm rests gently around his mother's left shoulder. Today, she is as fragile as a hand-blown glass figurine. Heads are bowed, eyes are lowered and hands are held in this room where everyone waits. I ask permission to touch him. It is given. His skin is pink and soft, like a ripe peach. Tiny translucent beads of perspiration teeter and then trickle down his face. Nestled in the crevice of his collarbone is the gold cross he had recently asked his mother to buy.

A nurse enters the ICU and confirms that he will be taken, the next day, to a special house for his end-of-life care. My fingers lightly circle one of his wrists. Inside, I am gasping.

'I wish a bomb would drop right now,' my friend of many years says. I know what she means.

An urgent need to leave and get back to my own child, hold her close, tell her I love her and never let her go overwhelms me. But I stay, feet frozen to the floor. I had watched Callum and my daughter through her bedroom window just days before. They sat on the bed and chatted easily. Old friends too. At the time I thought, *I hope they are like this when they grow up.*

Nothing is ever certain. Except this one thing.

Callum won't ever get to open his gift, *The Children's Encyclopedia of Insects*, which is already wrapped and underneath our Christmas tree.

Pamela Young SF0093

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FOR 2016/2017 IS NOW DUE

Memberships are due! To be financial until 30 June 2017, details are below:

<p>\$20 via EFT: Melbourne Marathon Spartans Club BSB: 633-000 Account No: 139201743</p> <p>Please include name and/or Spartan Number</p>	<p>Cheque for \$20 via Post: "Melbourne Marathon Spartans Club" PO Box 162 Rosanna Vic 3084</p> <p>Please include name and/or Spartan Number</p>
--	---

If you are a current member, you do not need to fill in a Membership Form but please advise of any changes to your contact details: spartans.team@hotmail.com.

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

VICTORIAN ROAD RUNNERS

Join the **Victorian Road Runners** on the first Saturday of each month at the Tan, commencing at 7.30 am for a 4km or 8km (or more!). <http://www.vrr.org.au/>

ADVERTISING ON THE WEBSITE!

Don't forget, we now have advertisers: <http://melbournemarathonspartans.com/advertisers>
Please identify yourselves as Spartans when you visit them.

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

SPARTANS' CLUB STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

To advance the sport of marathon running to athletes of all ages and abilities and to encourage and assist all runners to achieve Melbourne Marathon Spartan status.

To provide a platform and environment for runners to receive and to build upon their achievements enabling progression through the various Spartan milestone singlet colours.

Assist in the promotion and publicity of the Melbourne Marathon and the charities it supports.

BENEFITS OF BEING A SPARTAN

The Melbourne Marathon Spartans Club is a club consisting of marathon runners from all walks of life, ages and abilities that have achieved Spartan status by having run ten Melbourne Marathons.

The benefits of membership include regular newsletters, organised training runs, being presented with a Spartan singlet after ten years and subsequent milestone Spartan singlets each five years, the opportunity to attend our AGM and hear a top-line guest speaker, being able to avail of refreshments and free massage after finishing the marathon, receive benefits and discounts from companies that advertise on our website.

Contact Information

Email: spartans.team@hotmail.com

Website: www.melbournemarathonspartans.com

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

Life Members

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

COMMITTEE

President	Jay Fleming	0418 374 783
Vice President	Paul Basile	0439 718 281

Treasurer	Rod Bayley	9077 7192
Secretary	Felicity Doolan	0411 405 529
Webmaster	David Foskey	0432 146 747
Immediate Past President	John Dean	9337 7179
Committee	Cath Bombardieri	0407 996 356
Committee	John Dobson	0412 688 287
Committee	John Kaparelis	0447 447 448
Committee	Ashley Page	0448 866 025
Committee	Colin Silcock Delaney	5598 6090

Website References:

www.melbournemarathon.com
www.melbournemarathonspartans.com
www.coolrunning.com.au
www.vicmastersaths.org.au
www.athsvic.org.au
www.athletics.com.au
www.vrr.org.au
www.runnersworldonline.com.au
www.run4yourlife.com.au
www.traralgonmarathon.org.au
www.sixfoot.com
www.parkrun.com.au
www.ausrunning.net
www.runningcalendar.com.au

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THIS NEWSLETTER

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

JOIN OUR MAILING LIST

If you would like to be added to our mailing list or if you know someone who might like to join, please use this link:

<http://melbournemarathonspartans.us3.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=1d11105d27e7d4a57d982d728&id=513a0543c3>