

TOMORROW MAY NEVER COME – RUN GOLD COAST!!!

Powerful words appearing on the gigantic flyer overlooking the Gold Coast Convention Centre's sports exhibition and registration area.....and they sum up, better than any others the experience and atmosphere of the whole Gold Coast Marathon! Several past & present Alice Springs runners met on the Gold Coast last weekend to share the experience and find out first hand what 'being part of a now 'legendary running phenomena' means.

After 40 weeks of training – a little less for some but with lots of planning, advice, early, early mornings, freezing gatherings, aching muscles, new running attire, new iPod sound tracks, several training plans, hundreds or thousands of emails, bananas, snakes and litres of GEL from Corey's, our rather obsessive/hyperactive group were almost ready to take to the Gold Coast Highways for the 'time of their life'.

Our very own elite runners, **Emma Kraft & Pete Eason** had earned 'priority starts' for the event, which enabled them to be privy to such delightful treatment that us other not so elite folk only dream about! Unfortunately for Pete, who has been unwell since his courageous battle in Darwin for the City to Surf crown, had to withdraw from the event at around the 17k mark of the Marathon. Disappointing for us all, but most of all for Pete, who had earned a well respected elite runner's profile in the Marathon handbook and is highly ranked as an elite Australian Marathon runner. The highlight for so many of the Alice runners was to see Pete Eason up with the lead group after the 15k turnaround when the course doubled back on the rest of the field: thanks Pete! Better news and results for his gorgeous fiancée, Emma who ran a personal best in the ½ Marathon in a time of 1hr 26min and came home a credible 10th in her age group. Congratulations Emma!

All round local athlete, **Ben Bruce** and friend **Brenda Richardson** travelled from Canberra to compete in the 10k run. Ben came home in 42:02, slow by Ben's standard but he did admit that's what you get when you don't train! Brenda ran a 59:45 and finished off strong making the other Gold Coast babes look pretty ordinary! We need to pay tribute to both Ben & Brenda for their outstanding 'Territory style' support towards the Alice crew; particularly with their huge 0870 banner hanging out of a high-rise on the esplanade marathon course.

First time ½ marathoners, **Deanne Ward & Michael Curtiss** 'had a ball' to quote them and recorded a time of 2:14 for their trouble. Joining them for the half was local Doctor **Stratos Roussos** "the lone wolf" who's ambition was to run under 2hrs, which he did clocking 1:50, not too bad at all since his 1st priority was to support first time marathoner **Elise Rivett!**

Alice's best marathon result was left up to the oldest in the group who incidentally had completed his 4th marathon in 12 months, **David Ross**. David, whose ambition was to finish, do a PB and beat his 25 year old niece came home in about 3:31. Post race comment from David was "It hurt". Well done David, perhaps you didn't jag the PB but you did finish ahead of your niece and when we saw you running with the 'fast people' it certainly didn't look too hurtful!

First time Marathoners who 'Joined the Club' on the Gold Coast **Naomi Beal** (4:14) 'done & dusted – bring on the next one' **Elise Rivett** (4:16) running name "Rivetticus" & we just want to know what you had on your iPod – blitzed em! **Matthew Whitehead** (4:34) 'hit the wall at the 34km then got 2nd wind; what a rush? What's next?' Matt's lead-up to the start line was by no means the best experience; his delightful wife and team support person Kirrily had a bad fall just as we were leaving the hotel and had to be taken to hospital for treatment via ambulance. Just something to keep Matt's mind occupied for the next 4 ½ hrs until he received word that Kirrily had a severe sprain!

Our lovely, professional, team organiser and training co-ordinator, **Kate Anderson** (5:49) also did it tough; you just can't pick your days sometimes! However in true 'Kate spirit' her post race comments were 'full marathon completed – hard run with plenty of walking'. Kate's finishing photos have to be seen to be believed; who would have thought she had been out there for over 5 hrs! Kate's brother, Dave and his family joined in the '0870' clan and were a delight to meet and celebrate both running and life with!

Former Centralian's and Alice Springs Running Club dynamos **Chris Simpson & Robert Ellershaw** were re-claimed by the Alice crew and enjoyed a delightful post-marathon dinner with everyone. Chris ran a brisk 3:57 and commented 'I love running the Gold Coast! What a fantastic marathon? Competition, Camaraderie & Conquest!

Robert (4:23) commented 'just trying to keep up to Chris – another PW but great event and good to catch up with everyone from Alice'.

I'm last because I'm writing this report and that is etiquette! **Debbie Page** (4:02) 'gotta be happy with that – awesome atmosphere and felt good all the way! Perhaps I will go back at 60 and give it a go". Very pleased to come home 20th in my age group; was not expecting that sort of result, just happy to finish'.

The locally designed "0870" team uniform T shirts by Nicky Schonkala were a hit everywhere we went and made a real impact on the Queenslanders!

Special mention to all our family and friends who have taken up the slack in our personal and work lives in order to allow us to follow a dream.

To everyone else out there who may just be thinking 'some time in the future.....

"DON'T DIE WITH THE MUSIC IN YOU" (quote Wayne Bennett)