

BLOG #2. Training is going well...

February

Planning for Surf Coast Century

My overall plan for the Surf Coast Century is to have a gradual build up in distance over the period leading up to the SCC, so that by the time I get to September, I am reasonably confident that the distance is do-able.

To this end, in the first part of 2016, I have concentrated on two races at marathon distances that have decent hills to ensure that I build up enough strength that will allow me to handle the training throughout the year. I'm definitely not a strong powerful person and I'm like a fish out of water in a gym. I have discovered that as a relative newbie and maybe as a slightly older runner, that when I have increased my running into the ultra realm, I am susceptible to leg injuries. My focus on hills is partly designed to counter this but also a necessity as my current hamstring tendinopathy dislikes speed and flat running on hard surfaces, but funnily enough doesn't mind going up hills. This is at odds with my brain that tells me that hills are only good if you are going down them.



Events leading into Surf Coast Century

My rough event sign-up plan looks like: Roller Coaster 43k in the Dandenongs this month as a time-on-the-feet run in preparation for Buffalo Stampede Sky marathon in April. I am running the Larapinta trail in May on a luxe tour, the purpose of this run being to build-up my weekly kilometre distance in a beautiful place on my must-visit bucket list with a group. I have then signed up for the Prom 80k in early June which will be a little bit of a stretch, so if things (being injury and life) don't run really well I may have to drop down to the 60k. I also have the Brewster's Beer Run 21k lurking in March, because amongst all this 'serious' training, there needs to be fun and this event is guaranteed to be fun, plus craft beer and running are two of my favourite things.



February has been so enjoyable in a running sense: it started off with a bang with an awesome girls weekend away on the Buffalo course led by 'Trails on the Run' ladies Lucy Bartholomew and Caroline Gavin. It was brilliant running with a wonderful diverse fabulous group of women, great food, and much hilarity. I learnt so much, not the least of which is that Buffalo is going to hurt big-time. This kind of weekend camp is really beneficial for runners like me – a great chance to mix with and learn from the elites and reflect once again that the trail running community is incredibly supportive, encouraging and generous, no matter who you are or what your motivations and abilities.

The remainder of the time has been spent on the roller coaster course in the Dandenongs with a few Glasgow* repeats thrown in for 'enjoyment'. Plus, for the first time since November, my hamstring has allowed me to resume speed work, this is exciting, except for part way through my speed sessions when I start to think that life was better when I couldn't do speed-work. The after speed-work endorphin rush always makes it worthwhile though!

I had a good run at Rollercoaster to see out February, I ended up running quite a lot quicker than my time-on-the-legs plans as I was concerned about meeting the cut-off for the second loop. February stats: 294km with 9763m elevation gain. So far, so good!

* Glasgow is a fire trail that runs straight up the side of Mt Dandenong for 334 metres over 1.3km at 27% gradient (ish).

