

BLOG #7. If the shoe fits – wear it!

July:

I asked Chris Wight at the Running Company in Clifton Hill for some advice on what to look for in a shoe for Surf Coast Century. Chris races up the pointy end of the field in ultra's and when it comes to running shoes, he is a foot whisperer: a genius in fitting you with shoes that are oh so comfortable.

“The key for Surf Coast Century is to run in the shoe that feels the best fit. SCC is not a hugely technical course in most conditions, so unless it's exceptionally muddy, a trail shoe with a non-aggressive sole or even a road shoe will work well for the majority of the course. So run in the shoe that feels best to you. Everyone is different, shoes are very individual”

What about changing shoes or not after Leg 1? Chris says, *“It really depends on how comfortable a runner is running in wet feet, and how blister prone they are. Runners at the front on the field are unlikely to change shoes and socks, but given it will only take a couple of minutes, for those who are going to be out on the course for a while, the two minutes is a small price to pay for increased comfort and the feeling of dry feet over a long day. A person may chose, for example to run the first leg in a road shoe since that will be fine on the beach and change into a trail shoe for the remainder of the course.”*



So there you have it, wear the shoes that feel best and if you want to change your shoes after Leg 1, do so, or if you have good socks and a well draining shoe that you have tested in the wet and are comfortable with it – don't.

In my forays onto the beach on Leg 1 and at Wilson's Prom, I have found my shoes drain well and while I am a little blister-prone at anytime, having wet feet seems to make no difference to my foot comfort, so my intention is not to change shoes.

[The surf Coast Century is sponsored by La Sportiva who's Helios 2.0 shoes are highly suited to the non-technical trails of the course. Check them out at your nearest shoe store or visit our official retailer Bogong Equipment online at www.bogongequipment.com.au or in person at in Little Bourke Street in Melbourne. Ed.]

July's running adventures

My injured knee has finally recovered enough to run some decent distances again, although I have certainly been very careful – informed pushing of the boundaries is my management style!

I'm spending more time out on the coastal trails as Surf Coast Century gets closer, mentally rehearsing how I might feel during the race and trying to work out where



the tough points might be. I did an out and back on leg 4 early in the month – I love this leg.

I also paid a visit to Wilsons Prom for my first attempt at a marathon distance run in a while (I did an attempt at leg 1 and 2 but had to cut it short when the knee flared up). The following weekend was more successful with a recce of Leg 3 and 4. I finished up the month with another excursion to the Prom for a lighthouse loop that memorably involved an unintentional and fully clad swim on a high-tide creek crossing – always a great adventure down at the Prom! This run took me close to 11hrs – not quite as long as I think SCC will take me, but it was a good opportunity to trial nutrition, gear and hydration options for a long day out, plus I left in the dark trying to replicate the start of SCC under the light of my head torch for the first hour.

In addition to gradually increasing my long run distance, I have been participating in a Monash University study that is investigating the effect of internal cooling on gastro-intestinal health in endurance runners. The study involves running for 2 hours on a treadmill in 35 degree heat, and I have done this 3 times over the last 3 weeks. It's quite challenging and a bit of a desperado effort to escape Melbourne's wintery chill! It's also allowed me to do some back-to back hard runs with a view of replicating the feeling of running a long way on tired legs.

July statistics: 441 km with 7054 metres of elevation gain. Big month.

One month to go! So excited!

