

## June BLOG #6.

### *The power of play.*

Injuries are often a time for reflection – after all what else is one to do!

I have been unusually patient and not at all angsty during the course of this knee injury, partly because it was a freak accident but more likely because my journey towards this event has already taken me to where I wanted to go and even a little further. So I am content.

One of reasons I undertook to run the Surf Coast Century 100k was to create a journey that would allow me to explore. To explore the amazing natural environment we live in, to explore my limits, and meet others on their own journeys. To develop the ability to run anywhere, whenever I want to.

On the way, I rediscovered the power of play.

Play is the joy of running out of control down a muddy hill with arms out wide, the freedom of running through puddles, bounding along next to a mob of kangaroos, laughing with the kookaburras, having a wombat try to eat your shoes, watching a friend fail to boulder-hop across a creek and end up somewhat damp. It's in the excitement of taking a random track to see where you might end up, running through an environment that feels like an enchanted forest, crawling under a bridge looking for trolls, being child-like, being curious.



It's that 100% immersion in the environment, the presence that often escapes us in the busyness we set up for ourselves as adults, and the contentment that comes when we find that flow. Playing on the trails has given me time, space and perspective and loads of pure joy.

It's been a fabulous journey so far, with much more play time to come!

### June's running around in circles activities

I have found that running on the track is far kinder on my injured knee than any other surface, so by gradually increasing both my distance and speed on the track, I have reached the end of June almost back to full training distance-wise, but not yet at a high intensity – speed sessions and moving rapidly through technical terrain especially downhill still aggravate my knee.

I was not walking very comfortably, let alone running, so I didn't end up racing the 80km event at The Prom at the start of June as planned. I then signed up for the Surf Coast Trail marathon in the hope that I would be back to that sort of distance by late June. I got to race eve unsure how the knee would cope with that distance with my longest run being just 20 kilometres on the track. So I ended up (after much mental will-I / won't-I oscillation) dropping down to the half marathon to save the risk of further injury but to still feel part of it by doing 'something'.

It ended up being such a fun race and it was great to get off the track and back onto the trails! The people were great, the volunteers excelled themselves and because the course overlaps some of the 100km course for the Surf Coast Century I got see a few extra sections I'll be running over on race day.



Having got through that unscathed, I'll be looking to get back on the trails for longer distances, although I am becoming quite fond of my track! And I have great admiration for those athletes who complete 24hr track runs – amazing.

June statistics: 208 km with 849 metres of elevation gain – the track is fairly flat!

Two months to go! Getting very close now.

