

May BLOG #5.

Making sure an injury setback is to my advantage – and makes me better.

Injuries are frustrating.

I have got my body into a condition where I have overcome, or at least am able to maintain in a healthy state, some persistent injuries that I incurred as I transitioned to the ultra realm from marathons (hamstring tendinopathy and calf tear). But I have had a spate of knee injuries in the last 6 months which are not necessarily running related and that is super frustrating.

I currently have a medial collateral ligament complaint that occurred when a rock I stepped on slid off the Larapinta trail, taking one of my legs with it while the other stayed on the trail. End result: no running for a bit.



I manage my injuries mentally by ensuring I take advantage of the enforced hiatus to improve areas that I am normally too busy to work on intensively. My current injury-enforced focus is on core strength and ankle mobility/strength. To this end, I am doing core exercises prescribed by my coach Shaun Brewster and supplementing them with a core session I learnt from Lucy Bartholomew. For the ankles I am doing lots of single leg balance and jumps which should also help my knees.

This improvement focus takes away the blues associated with not being able to run to my ideal plans. Try it, it works – it turns an injury into an improvement scenario.

May Running Adventures

My preparation for SCC has turned into an excuse to go on amazing running adventures all around the country. Setting the goal of doing my first 100k has led me to create a very fulfilling journey exploring and immersing myself in our stunning natural environment.

The first week in May saw me back off the long runs and focus on short sharp sessions, before ramping up the kilometres in the second week with an impromptu run at the Prom early in the week, followed by a hit out on part of the Surf Coast Century course and then a run on the Great Ocean Walk (GOW) at the end of the week that added up to my first ever 100km+ week! I have waxed lyrical previously about the beauty of the Prom, but the GOW trail is one worth doing as well – spectacular coastal views and great single track running.



I then flew to Alice Springs for a Tour de Trails running tour of the Larapinta Trail. The Larapinta provides stunning technical running through diverse landscapes with incredible vistas. Our group ran six of the sections over the six days we were out on the trail and were greeted with fabulous food and luxe camping facilities (think hot showers, massage and live music) at the end of each days running – a different and enjoyable way to experience the beauty of central Australia. In my humble opinion, the Larapinta should be on every trail runners bucket list: truly a magnificent trail.

Despite my injury, sustained on day two of the Larapinta expedition, I took the calculated risk of resting day three, running a small part of day four, then completing the rest of the trip. I was uncomfortable, but felt like I was not doing too much extra damage: a risk worth taking given the stunning scenery and amazing running.

May statistics: 267 km with 6563 metres of elevation gain. Not as much as I had planned for since I had no running in the last week of May as a result of the knee injury.

Three months to go!



Ormiston Pound, Larapinta Trail. Photo credit: Simon Madden.