

Tim Rowe

THE LAST MONTH has flown by, as they seem to do when you're putting in the solid weeks. I've covered some kilometres and run some great speed sessions in the build up to the Gold Coast Half Marathon. Running has been far from easy since my debut over the marathon distance in Canberra. The disappointment of running much slower than anticipated was overshadowed by the loss of my sister Soph, who was critically ill at the time of the race. Soph lost her seven year battle with secondary breast cancer at the young age of 34 - five days after I crossed the finish line.

Moving away from the theory of total annihilation in sessions and long runs (even sometimes recovery runs), I've found that I'm giving my body the chance it needs to recover in time for the next training session. Don't get me wrong, the pain train still makes an appearance once or twice a week, just not every time I go running!

I think she was waiting for me to finish the race as I was racing in her honour. The past couple of months have been really tough for myself and the family but having a focus like running really helps in terms of keeping your head on your shoulders and maintaining goals, ambitions and an overall structure to life which I think could easily be lost otherwise. It's these goals, ambitions and structure that make every runner a unique, exceptional and very special sort of person, and no matter what your level of running, I think you know what I mean when I say that. We are superior people of course!

So back to training: I live and train with good mate Ben St Lawrence in the leafy suburb of Centennial Park, Sydney and we have together, smashed out some solid training over the past few weeks. This may as well be a dual training diary as we pretty much do the same sessions week in week out. Our squad, led by coach extraordinaire Sean Williams has gone from strength to strength with athletes such as the Saint, Lara Tamsett and Harry Summers proving that they can match it with the best in the country; not to mention, having a good time while doing so! Their recent results have positively impacted on the dynamics of

the squad and have paved the way for us all to start believing that the impossible, is actually quite the opposite. Personally, I have taken a different approach to my training ever since getting injured late last year. Moving away from the theory of total annihilation in sessions and long runs (even sometimes recovery runs) I've found that I'm giving my body the chance it needs to recover in time for the next training session. Don't get me wrong, the pain train still makes an appearance once or twice a week, just not every time I go running! A few changes that I've made in the lead up to Gold Coast Half Marathon include:

Hill Repeats

Incorporated into my longer runs: I run up a nastily steep 200m hill six times on my Wednesday run and 2 - 3 times on my one hour Monday run (depending on how I feel). I focus mainly on form, not speed, and this is helping me strengthen my hips and glutes (areas which I have trouble strengthening). I also do 4 - 5 uphill strides after my long runs (excluding Sunday). As well as a means of strengthening my body, this is also to prepare me for the City2Surf, as I fell off the pace on Heartbreak hill last year. ➔



■ Rowe finishing third in the 2009 NSW 5000m Championships. IMAGE BY DANIEL GREEN.

TRAINING DIARY

Tim Rowe

Age: 25
Coach: Sean Williams
Resides: Sydney
Date: May 24 - June 20
Goal: Gold Coast Half Marathon
Note: On every Monday and Wednesday, Tim finishes his run at the gym for a one hour strength and core stability session.

➔ **Altitude Training**

My local gym - TBC at Fox Studios - has designed an altitude chamber which allows me to train up to 5000m above sea level. I've been doing 3 - 4 recovery runs in there a week normally at around 4500m. The effects of this sort of training are not immediate and it can take anywhere from two to three years to see permanent changes in oxyhaemoglobin count. London is three years away.

Regular Physio & Massage

Thanks to the expertise of Brad McIntosh - biomechanical genius from Sydney Sports & Orthopaedic ➔



■ 2009 Canberra Marathon - Rowe had a tough debut but courageously battled on for a second place finish. IMAGE COURTESY OF MARATHON PHOTOS.

WEEK 1	SESSION	DIST (Km)	COMMENTS
SUN AM	2 hour Easy run	30	Averaged 4.00's - dropped to 3.30's for the last 15 mins (got the FLU!!)
PM	Rest		
MON AM	35 mins easy	7	
PM	1 hour easy run + Altitude	19	Ran from work to TBC Altitude chamber (20 mins) did 30 mins at 4500m then ran for another 52 mins around the park
TUES AM	35 mins easy	7	
PM	7 x 1km (80 sec recovery)	15	Awesome session - 2.43, 2.43, 2.43, 2.44, 2.43, 2.45, 2.38
WED AM	35 mins easy	7	
PM	1 hour 40 min run	23	Included 4 x 200m hill reps - Feeling very tired so rolled it out in a 4.30 average
THURS AM	Altitude	10	Ran to TBC Gym, Altitude chamber for 30 mins at 4500m then ran long loop into work
PM	12 x 400m (45 sec recovery)	15	63, 63, 63, 63, 62, 63, 62, 63, 63, 61, 62, 57 - Great session! Feeling really Fit!!
FRI AM	Rest		
PM	30 mins easy	7	
SAT AM	Rest		
PM	RACE: NSW XC Relays - Miranda (4km Leg)	12	Felt buggered but ran ok? Conditions were terrible!! Muddy as hell & parts of the course were like a creek bed! Clocked 12.10 - fastest leg of the day
TOTAL		152	

WEEK 2	SESSION	DIST (Km)	COMMENTS
SUN AM	2 hour run	28	Solid run - Started out very very slowly & wound it up, clocking 3.20's by the end
PM	Rest		
MON AM	35 mins easy	7	
PM	1 hour easy run + Altitude	19	
TUES AM	Altitude	8	Ran to TBC gym plus 30 mins Altitude at 4500m plus run to work
PM	3km (4 min recovery), 3km (4 min recovery), 1km	15	Great session! 8.37, 8.27, 2.30 - First time since marathon I've been able to kick down hard in a session
WED AM	Altitude	8	Ran to TBC gym plus 30 mins Altitude at 4500m plus run to work (tired from late night & bad sleep)
PM	1 hour 30 min run	22	Body feeling smashed - rained the whole run!
THURS AM	30 mins easy	6	
PM	8 x 800m (70 sec recovery)	15	Awesome session - 2.10, 2.07, 2.07, 2.07, 2.05, 2.04, 2.05 - Ran on road 800m course because of rain
FRI PM	30 mins easy	6	
TRAINING CAMP - Cudmirrah Beach, NSW			
SAT AM	Dune Session	12	1.5 hours of dunes!! SOLID!
MIDDAY	8km beach Tempo run	15	Great running off the dunes in the morning!! - Targeted this as a good hit out 4 weeks out from Gold Coast - 3.03, 3.02, 3.04, 3.08, 3.04, 3.04, 3.05, 2.57 plus 17secs @ 2.51 pace
PM	Strength		Lunges, Squat jumps, push ups, Bridging, medicine ball work
PM	30 mins easy	6	Buggered! - But won a meat tray at the Sussex Inlet RSL! No love on the dogs though
TOTAL		167	

WEEK 3	SESSION	DIST (Km)	COMMENTS
SUN AM	2 hour long run	30	Started out slowly and wound it up to cover 30km in just under 2 hours. Solid running with long hills in National Park
PM	30 mins easy	6	Ran while half asleep still!
MON AM	1 hour run	13	Very cruisy run with Saint, Harry & Josh Johnson through National Park - Legs buggered from BIG weekend. END OF CAMP
PM	38 mins easy	7	
TUES AM	Morning off - Tired from Camp.		
PM	10 x 600m (1 min recovery)	14	1.37, 1.34, 1.35, 1.34, 1.33, 1.34, 1.31, 1.34, 1.33, 1.31 - Worked the 7th rep hard to get the lactic acid going before the end of the session
WED AM	35 mins easy	7	
PM	1 hour 30 min run	23	Worked it solidly
THURS AM	Altitude	8	Ran to TBC gym plus 30 mins Altitude at 4500m plus run to work
PM	35 minute tempo run	19	Covered 11.06km and averaged 3.10's
FRI AM	Rest		
PM	Altitude	9	Ran from work to TBC and did 20 mins altitude
SAT AM	4 x 2km (3 min recovery) - Centennial Park	16	5.57, 5.55, 5.53, 5.50 - Felt Terrible. Body tired!
PM	48 mins easy	10	Rolled it out
TOTAL		162	

WEEK 4	SESSION	DIST (Km)	COMMENTS
SUN AM	2 hour run	28	Rolled out the first 120 then wound up with a solid last 20 mins
PM	Strength		Solid core plus strength session
MON AM	Altitude	8	Ran to TBC gym plus 30 mins Altitude at 4500m plus run to work
PM	1 hour easy run + Altitude	19	
TUES AM	20 mins solid	5	Ran fast into work as I slept through my alarm!
PM	2 x (2.4km (2.5 min rec), 1.2km (2.5 min rec))	15	Fast session on 1200m road loop with sharp hill at 1km mark. Ran 6.56, 3.19, 6.58, 3.14
WED AM	Altitude	8	Ran to TBC gym plus 30 mins Altitude at 4500m plus run to work
PM	1 hour 30 min run	23	Averaged 4.10's. Wound it up, clocking 3.40's at the end and feeling very comfy.
THURS AM	Altitude	8	Ran to TBC gym plus 30 mins Altitude at 4500m plus run to work
PM	Road Hills - 3 x 400m gradual hill + 15 x 100m STEEP hill	12	Felt really tired so held myself back from the boys
FRI AM	Rest		
PM	40 mins easy	9	
SAT AM	8km Tempo + 10 x 100m Hills	17	23.33 for the 8km effort - PAIN TRAIN! PB'd our 8km tempo course (4x2km loops) km splits: 2.56, 2.57, 3.00, 3.00, 3.00, 2.57, 3.02, 2.41 - great confidence booster! & just as fast as the 4 x 2km session the week before, But in a tempo!
PM	Altitude	8	
TOTAL		160	

↳ Physiotherapists - I have come to understand my body's weak points and have a strength program tailored to suit my biomechanics. Gary Howard at 'Easy Tiger Massage' has also been instrumental in keeping me out of harms way and as a result, I am running the fastest I ever have and am able to train much more consistently day in, day out.

Slower Recovery Runs

(5min/km + pace): This has definitely damaged my ego - being regularly overtaken by overweight 'corporate joggers' or mums with prams - but this has really helped in terms of recovery and stretching the legs out.

Diet

I've tried to be pretty strict on myself lately and have stripped back because of it. Feeling fit and looking fit go hand in hand in my head and it is more of a mental thing than anything. Just to confirm, Seany thinks my arms are still TOO big but I'm not sure how to get rid of them. Any hints please let me know!

It's these small changes that I've made that are really helping me stay on top of things mentally and physically and are allowing me to train to the best of my ability which will hopefully in turn, be reflected on the roads this winter season.

After Ben returned from the USA a few weeks back and others in our squad such as Harry Summers and Steve Thurston really starting to fire, training has taken a new face at the front of the squad. With a formidable and sometimes unforgiving pack to train with, it seems that on days where you don't quite have it, someone else will take up the charge and all you need to do is put the head down and hang on. I find this is key in terms of my progression as an athlete. There is no way in hell I would push it so hard if it wasn't for the guys I train with and I have said that countless times after hard sessions, especially after a 9-5 day at work. Running is an individual sport, but it is the collectiveness and camaraderie of the squad that will get me there; Sean has been instrumental in creating an environment to develop this logic and foster its continuity. As you can see in week two of my diary, we had a camp down the South Coast. Training at some points four times a day in freezing conditions; up and down sand dunes, beach tempos at near race pace, long runs with massive hills and endless strength sessions are more than enough to bury even the fittest of us, but it's the squad mentality that keeps you going. Our theory was that if it didn't kill us, it would only make us stronger, fitter and faster. We're still standing so here's hoping!

On a lighter note, some of the funniest things come from sessions when Park Rangers or members of the public, get in the way of a Sean Williams

training session. There is one ranger in particular with a dirty great moustache who tends to cause a ruckus any time he is on duty, whether it's him parking his four wheel drive in the middle of our 2km loop, or random pompous, poodle walking women getting angry at us for running on the road when our track is too wet to train on, Seany is always standing up for us runners and it's his passion and dedication that he shows for the group and our training, that inspires us to achieve our very best individually.

So looking ahead to this winter I'm excited to see what my legs can do. Hopefully pump out a good time at the Gold Coast Half Marathon and then kick on to some other road 10's/ XC races with the main aim being the Zatopek 10,000m later this year.

It's funny actually, how things can change so fast. This time two years ago I had recently graduated from the ANU with a Bachelor of Commerce and was following my dream of becoming an executive big wig at KPMG. I was in fact one of those overweight 'corporate joggers' that now overtake me on my recovery runs. If I was told that in two years time I'd be writing a training article for R4YL, I would've laughed it off. But, here I am. I hope that this gives you an insight into what it's like to train with myself and our squad.

A recent article written by Len Johnson suggests a possible "groundswell building here" in relation to the current state of Australian middle distance running. I have definitely noticed a change in the air with recent outstanding performances from Aussies at home and abroad, and as an athlete it is great to be a part of it. Hopefully with time, patience and consistent training, we will all be able to reach our future goals and continue to improve with every step we take. **R3**

■ Rowe competes in the 2008 WXC Trial at Stromlo Forest Park. GETTY IMAGES.

