



On The Run



2016 in Review
Installation 1 of 3



Harare Athletics Club



2016 has been an extraordinarily good year for HAC, and one that has put us back on the running map in the region. Portpher Dombojena ran in HAC colours to claim 5th place (3hr.17.43) at the Old Mutual Two Oceans Ultra, and Monica Kativhu, also running in HAC colours was the 11th lady (7.05) to finish at the Bonitas Comrades Marathon. Other commendable results were Gerald Madziyire's silver medal (7.29) at Comrades and young Alex Colegrave who ran the Two Oceans Half Marathon in 1.27.20 also earning a silver medal! Andy Edmonson ran his 20th Comrades this year to get his second green number! Despite the hard times, nearly sixty HAC members entered Comrades and Two Oceans and the club enjoyed a good sprinkling of PB's and impressive first runs. As Zimbabweans, we can be proud of these achievements! Well done everyone!

Talking of running in an HAC shirt, we have disposed of all the stock of the current club shirt at give-away prices because nobody was buying them! Whilst the HAC logo is strikingly visible on these shirts, there were numerous complaints about the heavy material. Excluding Comrades and Two Oceans, few members wear HAC vests at club runs which is a shame! There are South African clubs, Fish Hoek being an example, that fine their members if they arrive at a run wearing anything other than club kit! The challenges to finding a club shirt/vest that everyone wants to wear are numerous. First, our numbers limit us to ready-made stock, then our Constitution stipulates that shirts will be blue and white. Then there is the cut; some want vests, others shirts, and some of the girls prefer tank tops! The lighter the material, the higher the price, and some of our members can't afford to pay \$30 - \$40 for a shirt! Your Committee has been actively looking for a new HAC official club shirt/vest to replace the old one, with care taken to identify a garment that the majority of our members want to wear, and can afford to buy.

The over-riding motivation for competing in HAC-branded kit is pride! We want to be identified with the success of the club! HAC has an outstanding history of achievement. I am willing to bet that the number of silver medals HAC runners have won at Comrades over the years, in relation to the number of members we have, out-performs any South African club! So let's be proud of our history and achievements, and identify ourselves with the amazing running club we belong to, by wearing HAC kit on our runs!

Without sponsors, HAC would not be able to achieve a fraction of what it does! Whether, helping the elite athletes to get to South Africa, or putting up prize money to attract the best runners in the country at our big races, or providing staff and vehicles to deliver and man our water-points, event after event, the Club, and especially its Chairman, are extremely grateful! Thank you to all our sponsors, and in particular Old Mutual, Nyaradzo, Rooneys, Fuchs Lubricants, ZB Bank, and our new HAC 20 Miler sponsor, CIMAS!

All that is left is for me to wish you a very Happy New Year. May you enter it determined to achieve some new PBs!

Martin Webster
HAC Chairman

Editor's Notes

This newsletter has ultimately turned into a Magnum Opus, in 3 Instalments! In the almost complete absence of any contributions when these were invited in early 2016, and indeed, again towards end of year – with the notable exceptions of those you'll find from our Chairman Martin Webster, Nikki Kershaw, Aaron Whyte, Sally Wentzel and Jean Emmanuel – this has been put together (as were the last two 'On the Runs') as 'The Year in Review'; and again, features an awful lot of my own stories about the classic annual races - plus a few more besides – how about YOUR version this year?!

I know there are lots of other keen writers amongst our number – so, if you'd like a more regular newsletter – PLEASE CONTRIBUTE, FOLKS – at ANY time through 2017!

Just email these to rosie@wildimaging.net - and once I have enough to produce a shorter newsletter, I will, and you will see 'On the Run' arriving in your in-boxes, and more often, too!

Rosie Mitchell
Writer, Editor, Designer, etc
On the Run

Chairman's Rantings



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The First PPC Msasa Marathon

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The HAC Christmas Bash and Awards

A Jog Down Memory Lane:

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Peter Gradwell, other memories and stories
'Cabbages and Kings' on The Comrades 1975

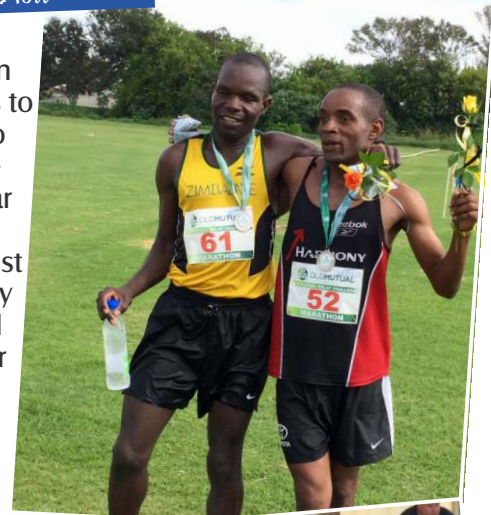
Old Mutual Marathon & Relay Challenge

by Martin Webster
photos by SJ Nott



The Old Mutual Relay Challenge was held on February 7th, a month earlier this year so as to provide a flat marathon for those wishing to qualify for the Old Mutual Two Oceans. The format of the race was the same as last year with a Marathon being the main event, supported by a relay, ie a team could consist of between 2 and 8 runners as long as they carried the baton for 42.2km, and 5,10 and 21km fun runs! This event aims to cater for all runners and attracted a total field was 425 runners making it the clubs biggest event of the year!

Old Mutual generously donated \$10000 worth of prizes for the Marathon, with the first open man and lady receiving \$1500 each! The prize money attracted some of Zimbabwe's best elite runners, amongst them Mike Fokoroni, Jonathan Chinyoka, Portpher Dombojena and Steven Muzhingi. Elite women entries included Lizy Chokore, Monica Kativhu and Tabitha Tsatsa. Portpher Dombojena won the marathon (see prize-winners on next page), and went on to a 5th place at the Old Mutual Two Oceans! Running conditions were fair, dry with a light wind and a maximum temperature of 26°C.



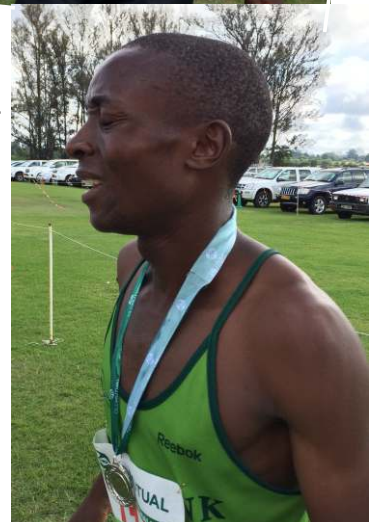
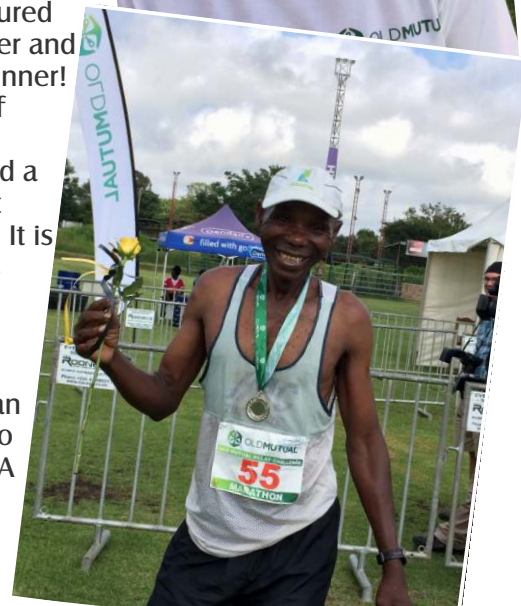
There were four water points which would have been visited 16 times if you were running the marathon. Each waterpoint was manned by employees of Fuchs Lubricants who rendered a cheerful and enthusiastic service and ensured that there was Coke and water and sachets available for every runner! Elizabeth Florists on behalf of Interflora handed each Lady Marathon runner who finished a rose whilst Dendairy gave out chocolate milk to all finishers. It is the support of these sponsors that make these runs such a pleasure!

One disappointment was that there were less relay teams than last year! An effort was made to attract more school teams, but this failed with only three schools teams present! A possible reason for this is that the event was held very early in the term? Another

aspect of the run that needs developing for next year is the "Challenge" component! We need to get more teams making challenges to other businesses, schools, churches etc. Spectator support was good with small crowds cheering runners on at the relay change points and the club.

A very big thank you to Old Mutual for their continued support of this event. All runners received an Old Mutual Relay Challenge Tee shirt and Marathon runners

completing the 42,2 kilometres in under five hours received a medal from Old Mutual!





OLD MUTUAL MARATHON RESULTS

GRANDMASTERS MEN

1	Jethro	Thebe	3.26.13
2	Thomas	Chidzaramambe	3.34.35
3	Amos	Chikudza	3.35.01

GRANDMASTERS WOMEN

1	Dorothy	Graham	4.24.50
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MASTERS MEN

1	Patrick	Chipoyi	2.54.20
2	Giyoto	Ncube	3.14.18
3	Abednico	Mabhena	3.22.13

MASTERS WOMEN

1	Val	Annandale	4.19.48
2	Paulette	Jarvis	4.30.10
3	Carolina	Pereira	4.35.01

VETS WOMEN

1	Samukeliso	Moyo	3.09.10
2	Tabitha	Tsatsa	3.09.34
3	Miriam	Choga	3.54.35

VETS MEN

1	Cephas	Pasipamire	2.28.30
2	Abel	Chimukoko	2.30.24
3	Elijah	Mutandiro	2.32.52

OPEN WOMEN

1	Lizy	Chikore	3.08.50
1	Samukeliso	Moyo	3.09.10
2	Tabitha	Tsatsa	3.09.34

OPEN MEN

1	Portpher	Dombojena	2.19.14
2	Mike	Fokoroni	2.20.10
3	Johnathan	Chinyoka	2.22.11

OLD MUTUAL RELAY CHALLENGE RESULTS

RELAY SCHOOL MIXED

Bright	2.38.10
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RELAY SCHOOL GIRLS

Hellenic Knights	3.48.22
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RELAY 8 MAN TEAM

OGS Rugby Club	3.36.08
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RELAY 7 MAN TEAM

Million \$ Babes	4.47.15
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RELAY 6 MAN TEAM

CB22	3.23.00
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RELAY 4 MAN TEAM

CB21	3.01.47
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RELAY 2 MAN TEAM

The Chitengus	5.28
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The Best Laid Plans

Nikkj Kershaw



*In the first half of
your race, don't be an idiot.
In the second half, don't be a wimp!*

Runners are a funny breed. They train hard, they think things through, they make plans. Some call them obsessed, or obsessive. They know their stats at any given moment. They know what mileage, and what combination of hills/speed/track/tempo/fartlek/Yasso 800s is needed to get them to reach their goals. They have a Race Plan, and a Nutrition Strategy; Bathroom Breaks and Medication Breakers; Pacing Bands, Seeding Groups, Cut-Off Times – and Advice.

They have Plans A – D, with carefully considered variables and outcomes. And then there's me.

I rock up with a half-baked idea in my head, and a hope and a prayer.

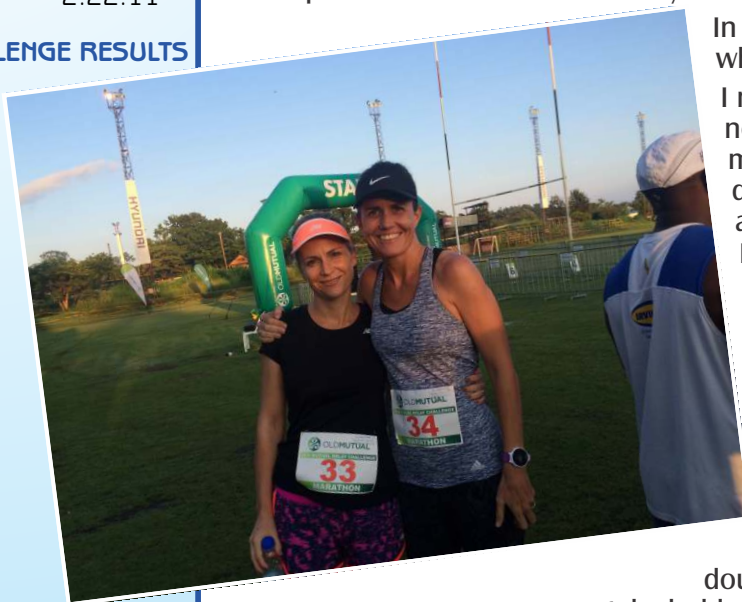
In life, as in running, I'm a "Let's see what it's like on the day" kind of girl.

I run because I love to run, but I've never had a clear plan, or set myself time/pace/speed targets. I don't know that I have ever "raced" a race (outside of school) – or that I even know how to do so.

I'm OK with this, generally – but sometimes, I forget.

Sometimes, I get carried away. When a big run is coming up, a Qualifier for a bigger run, say, I get carried away in the excitement, and the nerves, and the ambitions of the other runners. I allow the seed of

doubt, optimism or romanticism to take hold, and I make an impulsive decision.



When I lined up at the Start of the Old Mutual Relay Challenge at the beginning of February, my qualifier for Two Oceans and Comrades, I decided to go out faster than usual, to see how I felt, to bank time in the beginning, to enjoy when my legs were tired toward the end.

Monumental disaster.

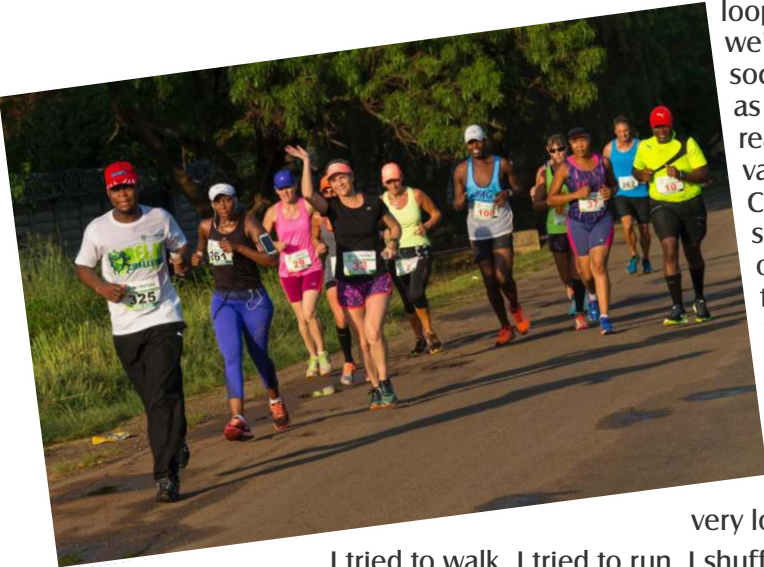
I flew for the first 17k. I felt invincible. I was furiously calculating pace and time, and I looked likely to break my marathon PB by more than half an hour. I congratulated myself over and over on a well-executed training plan, and had visions of celebrations at the end (including a blow-by-blow account to my husband travelling on business).

And then, at around 17.75km, karma bit me in the backside.

I realised I'd failed to apply Glide to my inner arm, and was running in a new shirt. The sun was hot, and I was beginning to chafe. The race was a four-lap



loop going through Old Georgians' fields – and we'd had torrential rain the night before. My (new) super-thin socks and air-conditioned runners were a terrible combination, as I could feel mud, sand, and tiny little stones under my feet. I reached the end of the second lap, desperate for some vaseline to soothe my now-raw arm, only to find water and Coke. Unlike in races in the rest of the world, we don't have spectators lining the streets, or thousands of (more organised) runners to share the road, and our water points tend to be well-managed but fairly functional in terms of what they offer. My arm ached with every rotation, and I couldn't take my focus off the discomfort I was feeling in my feet. There was nothing around for me to fixate on – we were running through Deathly-Dull-Walled-Suburbia, with no hills or trees or natural beauty of any description. My soul wanted to shrivel up on that pancake flat road and take a very long nap.



I tried to walk, I tried to run, I shuffled. I counted every lamp post, every gate, and every person I ran past. Beyond conversation, I could only muster a grimace as I tried to coerce myself into a one-two-three-four rhythm, to dull my senses, and wait for the Bad to pass.

When tough times on the road hit, as they inevitably do, I have a variety of strategies I use to overcome. However, these almost always rely on me recognising the slippery slope to hell, and jumping in super-quick, before my brain starts melt down. Once we go down that path, it can take a good 10k to recover. On this day, the chafe and the foot stones, but mainly the setting out far too fast meant that my Long Dark Teatime of the Soul was stretched to 18k. Eighteen of the longest, most punishing kilometers I've probably ever experienced. I had some beautiful moments in those kays – my Support Crew drove past, my kids with their optimistic smiles and blind faith in me evident in their eyes, my Dad with his encouraging words and frozen water, and my Mum with her LIFESAVING tub of Vaseline; friends on the road dishing out encouragement as we passed each other on the laps; cheering the Elites as they ran past; celebrating others as they worked towards their goals. However, those kilometers were hard, and seemed to take forever.



I barely recovered from that marathon. I left my Two Oceans and Comrades dreams on that road, and it was only with the support of my good running friends, and my Dad, who convinced me to dust myself off and to persevere, that I was able to continue.

I qualified for both Ultras on that day (although missed my seeding goals), but my biggest gains were the lessons I learned on that road. I got cocky in the beginning, and that marathon whipped me into shape in no time at all.

This is The Run I took into Comrades with me.



In Memory of John Goodwin - great runner, great friend to many

Farewell, John Goodwin

by Rosie Mitchell
photos Rosie Mitchell and Sean Quinlan

The untimely and sudden passing of well-known and talented local runner John Goodwin in January 2016, who chalked up 12 Comrades Marathon medals, 10 of them Silvers, cast a great sense of loss and sorrow through the running and cycling community.

A special HAC run was held in his memory, with Comrades runners wearing their Comrades shirts or memorabilia in his honour. He is very fondly remembered by us all, as someone who greatly and patiently encouraged all athletes of every ability, and was as passionate about his sport as it is possible to be.

Our empathy and support remain with his long-time partner Mel Barnes, herself an accomplished runner, Comrades Green Number holder, triathlete and coach, and founder and manager of Run/Walk for Life Zimbabwe, as well as a long-time HAC member and former Committee member. Our thoughts also continue to go out to John's family and vast network of friends who miss him greatly.

In 2015, John helped Mel prepare a group of Run/Walk for Life members - Comrades first-timers - to run the Big C, and accompanied us to Durban where we all stayed together as a group. Mel ran the race again herself, stopping to assist George Fletcher when he succumbed to dreadful cramp, and buddying some of the members of our group in the race, too. The pictures at right were taken during this trip.

None of us will ever forget John's kindness, patience and encouragement, which he extended to all of us, no matter our speed, stamina or experience - or his sense of humour, and fascinating stories of his many adventures. These included climbing Mount Aconcagua in South America, one of the Seven highest Summits of the world!

An accomplished civil engineer, John was involved in the construction of many of our country's dams and water storage facilities and died suddenly while working on a project in Zambia. He is remembered very fondly by all who knew him.

The John Goodwin Memorial Run



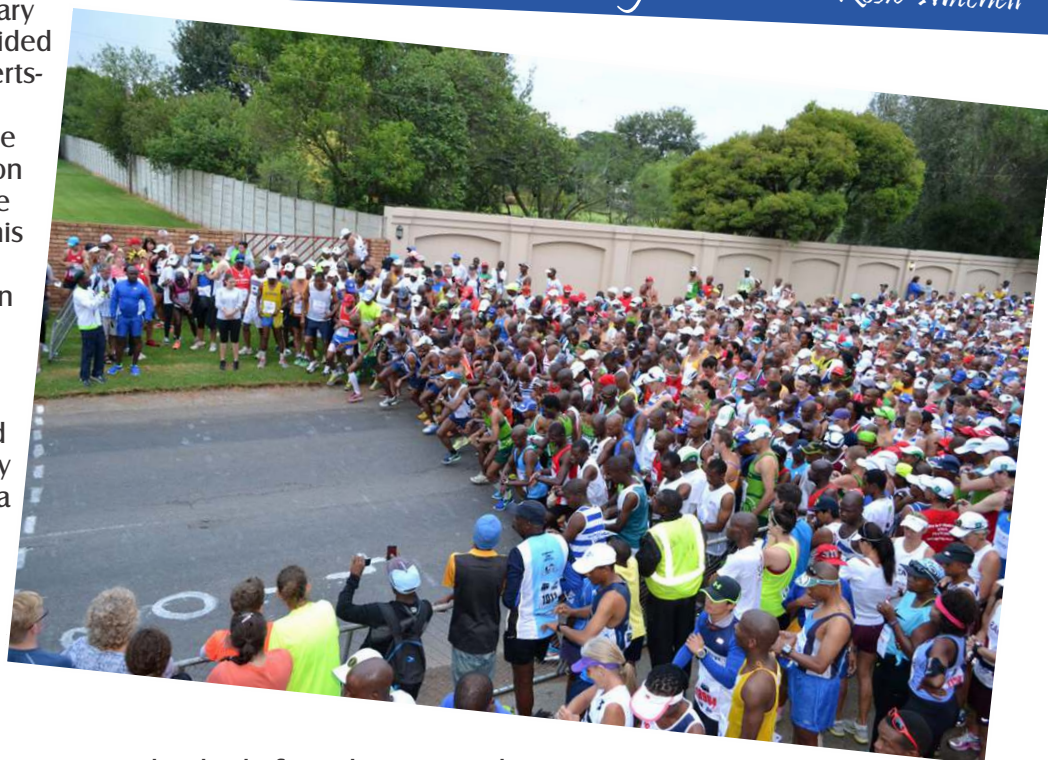
The 34th Johnson Crane Marathon, Benoni, Jo'burg

Rosie Mitchell

As Sarah had to go to Jo'burg in January for an important work seminar, I decided to tag along. Her boss Norman Roberts-York, a keen South Africa Comrades runner who lives in the UK, tipped me off about the Johnson Crane Marathon – which conveniently coincided. Due to injury, he couldn't run it himself this time, though he'll be there this year, and hopes to get his Comrades Green Number this May.

This is a fantastic race with a long history and a great vibe. It has been organised by the Benoni Harriers and sponsored by Johnson Crane annually since 1982. There's a full marathon, a half marathon, a 10km and 5km race and a kids' 1km too.

Even better - this is a 'Mat to Mat' race – so no lost time getting to the Start line! This makes it an attractive proposition for Two Oceans and Comrades qualifying times!



I hit a hump in the road when I went to register the day before, discovering that as an international entrant, you cannot buy a temporary SA runner's licence to run a marathon, only a half marathon. I'd been informed otherwise when enquiring online about this, so it was a bit of a shock. Apparently this is all about insurance! Marathons are deemed riskier than half marathons, and SA running clubs don't want to get sued! Luckily for me, I recognised a friendly face amongst the organisers – Norrie Williamson, who is a rather famous ultra runner and also a coach, and with whom we had communicated online about Two Oceans training, as he is the Old Mutual virtual coach for that event. This had led to both Sarah and I having a coaching session with him in Cape Town in 2014, and he never forgets anyone – we always go and have a great chat with him at the Two Oceans and now Comrades Expos. I explained my predicament. He managed to pull some strings and I was permitted to buy a temporary licence by exception – but this year I have investigated the correct procedure and am getting it right!

I hadn't realised what a big event it was until we got close to the venue, where traffic congestion was a little alarming, but I made it to the Start with time to spare. That's when I got a measure of just how large this is – it attracts over 10000 runners these days! The great thing about Mat to Mat – this brings my first such race in SA – is that there is no need to be concerned about where you are at the Start as you will only start to be timed once you cross the Start. So there were no starting pens, regardless of the huge volumes of runners. The marathon is a pleasant double loop around the Benoni area and though undulating, there are no really hectic hills. There are lots of water points, it is well organised and there are lots of friendly supporters along the way. I realised, running this marathon, that running long distances definitely does get easier with practice, as it did not seem anywhere near so tough as my few preceding marathons, up to that point. I ran a personal best time, and though he was sad not to run himself that day, Norman was there with Sarah to see me cross the finish line. I was thrilled to bits with my time, not just because it was my best yet, but also because it pushed me into G seeding for the Comrades.

This year, I'm gunning for F, and will run this race again on 29 January with that in mind! We enjoyed great hospitality at the Run/Walk for Life tent. As RWFL members here in Zimbabwe, we can pitch up at any RWFL stand or tent anywhere, and receive a warm welcome!

If you can manage to scabble together the transport cost and have someone to stay with in Joburg, I can highly recommend this event!



The Bruce Fordyce HAC Dinner

pics and words
Rosie Mitchell

Bruce Fordyce, the famed 9 times winner of the Comrades Marathon, 8 if these consecutively, once again graced HAC at a special dinner held at Millers Café in January. Bruce is a consummate public speaker guaranteed to amuse his audience, and the dinner was very well attended and very festive. His talk was as enjoyable as we have come to expect, and as well as chatting about the Comrades, he spoke in detail about the Park Run, which has become a global phenomenon.

He has championed Park Runs in South Africa and is helping spread the concept all over the country. Park Runs were started in the UK by Paul Sinton-Hewitt



(originally South African) in 2004. Park Run is instrumental in encouraging vast numbers of people of all ages to adopt an active lifestyle, for the good of their health and to enhance a sense of community. Park Runs are 5km long and are held in parks and other



suitable green spaces in towns and cities every Saturday morning, all over the world. They are sustained by the work of volunteers, plus some corporate sponsorships, and no fee is charged to join or participate.



Once registered as a Park Runner online, you can do a Park Run anywhere in the world, using your unique race number and bar code which you print out yourself. All results are recorded and can be accessed online and various milestones, such as first ten or first 100 runs, are marked in a celebratory manner with the presentation of colour coded Park Run shirts – helping to keep people running, and fit and healthy, and recognising their achievements.



The HAC World's View Run, Troutbeck 21 Feb

Rosie Mitchell
photos SJ Nott

Athletes, elite and recreational, were everywhere in Nyanga the weekend of 20 and 21 February 2016. On the Saturday, there was much excitement, not to mention the usual superlative ZimTri organisational proficiency, with the major annual international Triathlon event - the Troutbeck African Triathlon Union African Cup, combined with the Zimbabwe National Triathlon Championships, followed by the Troutbeck Open Water Swim. Quite a number of seriously keen athletes took part in both the triathlon and the swim! Then, as if that were not enough, they went for broke, by joining the runners on Sunday morning, for our 20th HAC World's View Run!

A total of 81 runners and walkers participated in the World's View event, 27 of these taking on the lovely 8.5 km route, and 55, the full 18 km route, both of which started and ended in the Troutbeck car park. The 18 km route went all the way up to the famous World's View and back, following a wonderfully scenic loop route on dirt roads. With this race being run at much higher altitude than Harare, and taking the runners up to over 2 500 metres, it is very challenging, the air being thinner than most participants are accustomed to, and the gradients very, very steep, too! But the training benefits are therefore greater, and it is popular with those in training for the Two Oceans and Comrades Ultra Marathons.

It is more of a trail run than a road race, since most of it is off tar, and this adds extra challenge too, as running on dirt requires greater effort for the same distance. Gerald Madziyire, Laki Ngwenya and Stuart

Gemmill, were first, second and third man to finish respectively, with Gerald beating the 1 hour 30 minutes mark by 5 seconds, and Miriam Choga, Debbie Colegrave and myself, were first, second and third lady to finish.

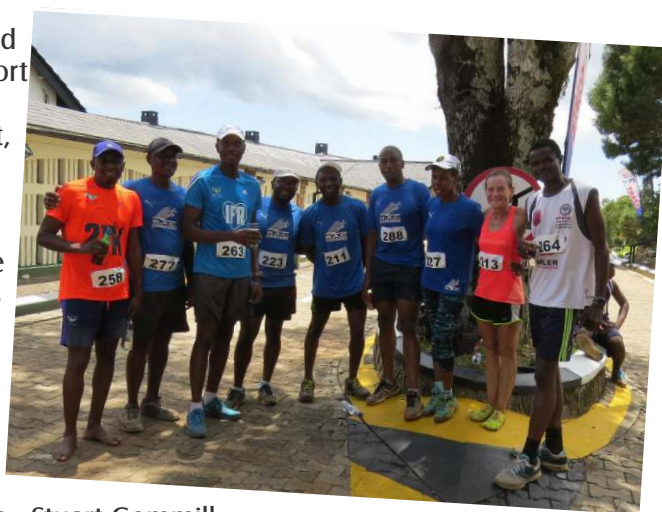
Stuart Gemmill managed an amazing 1 hour 34 in spite of having competed the day before in the full triathlon event and coming second! Paul Collins

who was ninth man to finish in 1 hour 45, came third in the full triathlon the day before and also did the 750 metre Open Water Swim! Second lady, Miriam Choga ran the 18 km race in just 1 hour 43, despite having run 40km in training the day before! It all went to prove that when the going gets tough – the tough get going! And tough or not, all those who participated really loved the scenery and the fresh mountain air, even if it was a taxing experience physically.

Whether or not taking part in the triathlon events or the open water swim, World's View runners made a weekend of it, ourselves included. It so happened that our family were also in Nyanga for the weekend, so we spent a very enjoyable time with them at the superbly placed Far and Wide Pungwe Cottages, nestling by the river, messing about in kayaks.

There are single kayaks provided at the cottages, but we took advantage of the opportunity to try out our new inflatable kayak which we recently brought back from Johannesburg in its box, as a piece of hold luggage. Costing less than \$100 at the time, this has turned out to be one

of the best value recreational purchases ever. It weighs less than 20kg, only takes 10 minutes to unpack and inflate and to deflate and pack, and is very comfortable and robust. It was the second time we tried it out, and it was a hit with everyone!



Two Oceans Marathon 2016

Rosie Mitchell, most pics by SJ Nott

What a magnificent Two Oceans! Three Zimbabwean runners in the top 5 finishers, and a gold medal for Portpher Dombojena running for HAC!

The three Zimbabwean Elite Men's positions & times were:

Mike Fokoroni	3.13
Collen Makaza	3.14
Portpher Dombojena	3.17

HAC Two Oceans Ultra results:

Gold Medals

Portpher Dombojena	3.17.40
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Sainsbury Medals:

Grant Mare	4.47.35
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Bronze Medals

Miriam Choga	5.16.10
Martin Webster	5.20.13
Paul Marais	5.21.44
Colin Colegrave	5.23.21
Roberto Bertoletti	5.23.49
Alice Matimba	5.33.24
Debbie Colegrave	5.37.30
Simon Hammond	5.49.55
Ricina Mandivenga	5.51.26
Shelley Winsor	5.51.49
Julie Havercroft	5.54.05
Tanya Tippet	5.54.05
Keith Webster	5.56.42

Blue Medals

Dorothy Graham	6.04.39
Rosie Mitchell	6.05.39
Ian Brown	6.05.47
Angela Cluet	6.17.47
Laki Ngwenya (Pacer)	6.17.47
John Makamure	6.18.30
Philip Mataranyika	6.19.41
Dean Griffen	6.20.59
Nikki Kershaw	6.23.51
Lewis Kling	6.30.27
Byron Marais	6.36.54
Amina Bertoletti	6.44.58
Ronald Mujakachi	6.49.58
Ian Bagshaw	6.50.42
Wilfred Mapfuiwe	6.57.42

HAC Two Oceans Half Results

Alex Colegrave	1.27.20
(Silver)	
Brad Searle	1.44.49
Phillipa Hammond	2.11.27
Steve Holm	2.12.44
Marianne Wright	2.12.44
Ed Madza	2.14.30
Jenny Lovell	2.24.39
Davidzo Chitengu	2.39.43
David Chitengu	2.40.48
Howard Choga	2.49.23
Chido Chitengu	2.51.31
Sarah Joan Nott	2.52.17

2016 marked our eighth trip to Cape Town over Easter for the Two

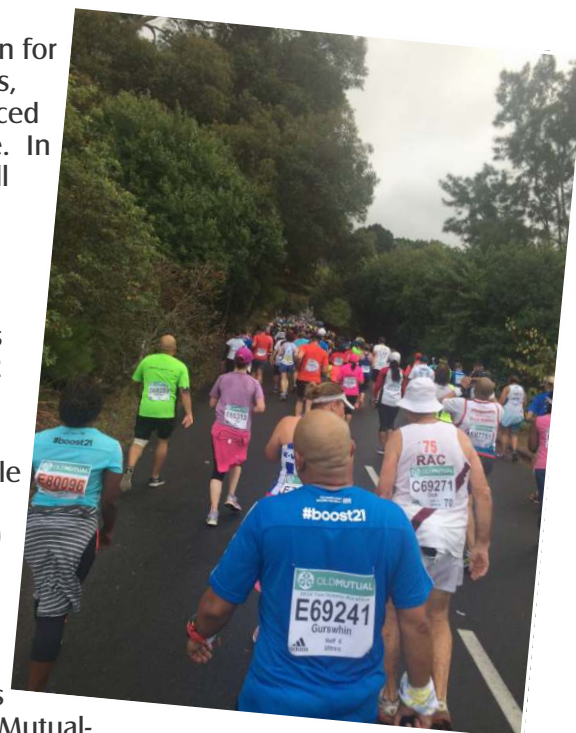
Oceans Marathon. The Two Oceans Half Marathon in 2008 was the first running event I ever entered. This was an amazing experience and the best introduction to very big races that a new runner could choose! I've been entering races ever since, and we've returned for the Two Oceans events annually too. Soon enough, Sarah, who never thought herself a runner, could not resist giving the Half a bash! She loved it, and in 2016 ran her fifth Two Oceans Half, and ninth half marathon to date.

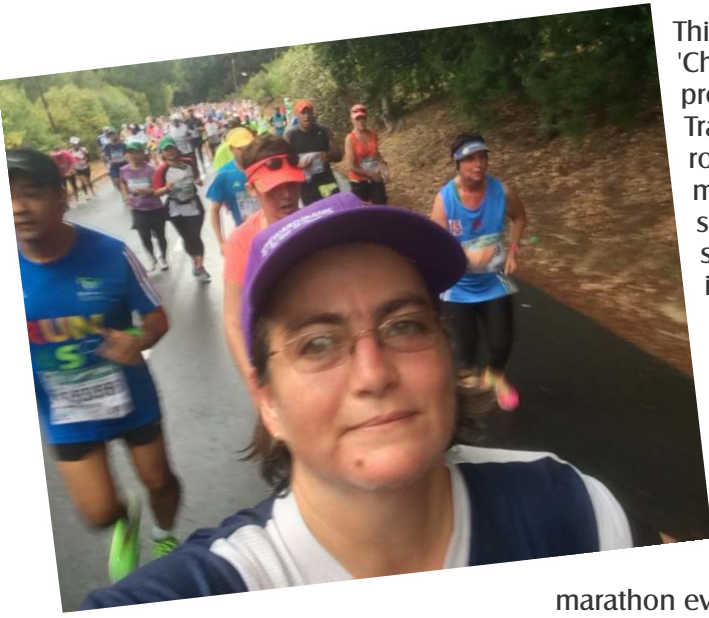
The Two Oceans Marathon, actually an ultra marathon at 56km, and originally a training run for Capetonian Comrades ultra marathon hopefuls, turned 47 on 2016, while the Half was introduced in 1998, and has become a vastly popular race. In 2008, I got a place online with no trouble at all some months after registration opened, and 11000 of us lined up for the race, with an additional 5000 for the Ultra. Today, the now 16000 places in the Half sell out within hours, and 11000 runners line up for the Ultra, places for which, in 2016 sold out in record time on 2 January, and two months before registration closure.

A Long (22km) Trail Run up Devil's Peak in Table Mountain National Park and Short (12km) Trail Run up part of it were introduced in 2010 (500 places for each, and very hard to secure, selling out in minutes!) and there are several Fun Runs for all ages on the periphery too. This has over the decades become one of the world's most famous and popular celebrations of recreational and competitive running. Old Mutual-

sponsored for many years, prize money is significant, attracting many serious elites both for the prestige and for the possible financial reward. Runners of every ability flock in from all over the globe to participate in 'the world's most beautiful marathon' as it is dubbed, with much of the Ultra route hugging the coast of the Cape Peninsula from the Indian to the Atlantic Ocean and taking runners around the gorgeously scenic Chapman's Peak Drive (fondly referred to by the ultra race runners as 'Chappies') with its outstanding vistas over the Atlantic and Hout Bay.

The races are superbly well organised and there's an exciting Expo at Registration too, where you can cruise around seeing all the latest running gear and gadgets. Cape Town is a wonderful place for a holiday and runners from outside it turn the race into a reason to spend their Easter here, greatly boosting the local economy.





This was my first time to run the traditional Ultra route around 'Chappies' and then up Constantia Nek into Cecilia forest. I progressed over the years from the Half, to the much tougher Long Trail, to running these two back to back over 24 hours two years in a row, then finally to the Ultra, having sworn I'd never take on such a mind-boggling distance, especially with so many steep hills! I sensibly bailed at 21km in my first Ultra attempt, in deference to some frightening, potentially dangerous symptoms from attempting it while still battling the tail-end of an awful flu.

Last year, the Ultra was re-routed due to the terrible fires which swept the peninsula, causing Chapman's Peak Drive to be closed as unsafe. Instead, we ran up the even steeper Ou Kaapse Weg, nonetheless, still a very scenic route. Hampered for half the race by a muscle-imbalance-induced very sore knee (soon sorted out with physiotherapy afterwards) I managed to finish my first ultra

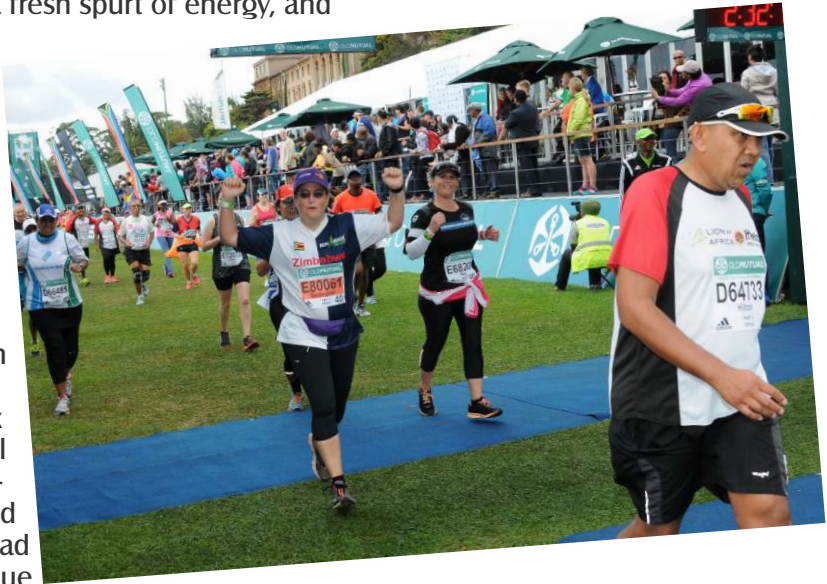
marathon ever with this event with 12 minutes to spare before cut-off. I was delighted.

This year I was very excited to run the normal, exceptionally beautiful route, which fully met my expectations! The start of both races was as exciting and emotional as ever, with 27000 runners lined up together for both and the Half starting first. Crowd support along the way was as fantastic as ever. The idea of running up super-steep Chappies and Constantia Nek was very



daunting, however. One follows the other with hardly a break on the flat! However, I managed to run all the way up both, enjoying the fabulous view over the ocean and huge crowd of runners snaking its way up the Peak!

After that, I found a fresh spurt of energy, and enjoying the downhill of Rhodes Drive, roared my way onwards to the finish with a smile on my face throughout. I finished in 6 hours 5 minutes, 43 minutes faster than the previous year, missing the sub-six hour Bronze medal by just 5 minutes –



2017, maybe?! I was neither sore nor stiff, and truly loved the race experience! Sarah and Rob, neither of whom had had enough time to train as much as they had wanted due to hectic work pressures and in Sarah's case, a lot of work travel too, were both very pleased also, finishing very close to their times of the previous year nonetheless, and enjoying the vibe and festivity, as any runner in these races cannot fail to do! After our races we thoroughly enjoyed socialising and catching up with friends in the International Hospitality Tent.

Following a post-race quiet day, the next day Sarah and I set out for a lovely walk along the coastline from Fish Hoek, where we stayed in a gorgeous self-catering house near the beach. Wherever possible, we walked on the beaches, and we loved watching the seals and activity at Kalk Bay Harbour before exploring some of the interesting shops in this quaint, trendy place. We continued on from there, ending up a long way down Muizenberg beach, where conditions were perfect for surfing and surfers were everywhere, along with families enjoying a lovely Easter Monday outing.

As our legs got tired and feet began to hurt a little, we were astonished to discover (from Sarah's high-tech Apple watch!) how far we'd actually walked, and by the time we got home, just after dark, we'd covered 25km – not our intention, but we had a lovely time! We stayed on in Cape Town for several days, doing all the thing we love to do there - especially, hiking in Cape Point Nature Reserve, walking on Noordhoek beach, visiting the penguins at Boulders, and soaking up all that lovely sea air! Roll on Two Oceans 2017!