

FITZROY FALLS MARATHON

Saturday 9th October saw the running of the 11th and largest running of the *Annual Fitzroy Falls Fire Trail Marathon*. In preparation for my Ultra marathon towards the end of the year, I decided to go down and have a race.

The morning of the race held perfect conditions for running- overcast and not too hot. The start line saw 118 people lining up at the Twin Cottages owned by the famous Cycling McGee family. We were lucky enough to be started off by Brad, but as the toilet lines were quite long before the start of the race I wasn't sticking around to chat about wearing the yellow jersey!!! My goal was to go out and try and hold 5 min/km's for as long as I could. As the course had around 700m of climbing in it, it was a matter of making use of the down hills as much as I could for the up.



The marathon is predominately run on firetrails, however the better part of the first km is a narrow trail - so it saw people jostling for position. Then 2km into the race there was a creek crossing that saw people lining up to cross on the side rocks so as not to get wet feet. My turn to cross and I trod on wood that sank to the bottom of the creek, and I was ankle deep in water. *What a waste of time waiting!!!*

As the race continued on I felt good but didn't want to run much faster the 5min pace as I knew it was a gradual climb for the last 12km of the race. The km's rolled by pretty uneventfully and soon I was on the 21.1km mark. I ran past in **1.44** and was happy enough and on pace still. This part of the course was at a turn around and I could see the front runners. I started counting positions and thought if I could possibly keep up my pace I may finish in the top 25, but there was still another 21.2km to run...

From here on in the course was more up than down and I started to pass runners more consistently than I did at the start of the race. That wall that hits at about 30km was certainly effecting a lot of competitors!!! The last 12km's were definitely harder than the first 30 but with the finish in sight and more runners to chase I wasn't slowing down. I was running past 2 walkers at about the 40km mark and they said to me "*well done, your coming 12th*". I know my counting isn't great at the best of times so I laughed it off and decided to run as hard as I could to the finish. I passed another competitor and came back into the cottages to a small group of watchers cheering me home.

I ended up coming 11th overall in a time of **3:27:37** hitting my goal of 5min/kms with time to spare and very happy to get my finishers bacon and egg roll!!!