

Next Stop Berlin



One Down Five to Go....

The runRICKYrun project is now up and running. The Boston Marathon on 16th April 2018 was the start of Ricky's attempt to complete the **Abbotts World Marathon Majors** within 12 months.

As well as Boston, this project will take in the cities of Berlin, Chicago, New York, Tokyo and end with the London Marathon on 28th April 2019.

This project will take in the following:

- *Training Distance - 2,500km**
- *Marathons - 6 (253.17km)*
- *Flights - 32*
- *Flight distance - 157,866km*
- *Money for Charity TARGET - \$42,195 USD**

So the next official event will be the Berlin Marathon on 16th September. Before that Ricky will proudly represent Great Britain at the Asia Pacific Masters Games in Penang. Ricky will be running in the Half Marathon (21km).



NEWS FLASH: Ricky will be representing Great Britain in the Asia Pacific Masters Games held in Penang when he runs in the 21km Half Marathon.



Boston Marathon

This was not quite the marathon that Ricky signed up for. It was cold (3-4 degrees), strong headwinds (25-35 kmph) and incessant rain.

Boston Marathon 2018 has been described as a "brutal" experience. It was certainly the hardest challenge that Ricky has completed to date. Read more on page 3.



You could say that "Boston was wet.....!"

The Charities.....



Macmillan Cancer Support

Ricky will be running the **Berlin Marathon** in September and the **New York Marathon** in November 2018 for **Macmillan**. This is a charity that assisted Ricky's Mother during her recent fight against cancer.

UNICEF

Ricky was raising money for UNICEF at the **Boston Marathon** and he raised over **\$10,300 USD** at the first **runRICKYrun** event - Ricky has stopped raising money for UNICEF now as the official target has been exceeded.



Ronald McDonald Housing Charities (RMHC)

The **Chicago Marathon** in October will be in aid of RMHC. They aim to "keep families close" during times of need. Ricky has raised money for RMHC previously when he ran the 2016 **Tokyo Marathon**. Being part of over 1,000 runners in TeamRMHC.



Children with Cancer UK

For the **London Marathon**, Ricky has partnered up with the Children with Cancer charity. Historically Ricky has always raised funds for children's charities and added this worthy cause after his mother died at the hands of cancer.



If you would like to help Ricky to raise funds for these charities please go to the following link and donate.

All money raised is directly for the charities concerned.

DONATE HERE: www.runRICKYrun.net/wish-to-donate/

RACE REVIEW: BOSTON MARATHON

The first stop in the runRICKYrun marathon tour was an April trip to Boston in the U.S.

The Boston Marathon has a long history, so to start the project in such an illustrious race was epic.

However, this event will not be remembered though for the actual race, but more for the weather conditions that made the 2018 Boston Marathon the coldest for over 30 years.

The extreme and brutal weather conditions created some major issues for the race organisers. Having 30,000 plus runners on a course in the harsh weather placed a huge burden on the medical volunteer staff.

Hypothermia was a real issue as the cold, wet & windy conditions, which resulted in the stats below:

- *2,400 Runners needing medical treatment*
- *81 Runners taken to hospital*
- *25 Elite athletes did not finish*

The Athletes village in Hopkington was a mixture of mud and slush from the overnight snow. Trying to keep your shoes dry was impossible. Most runners were wearing bin liners to provide some protection against the weather.

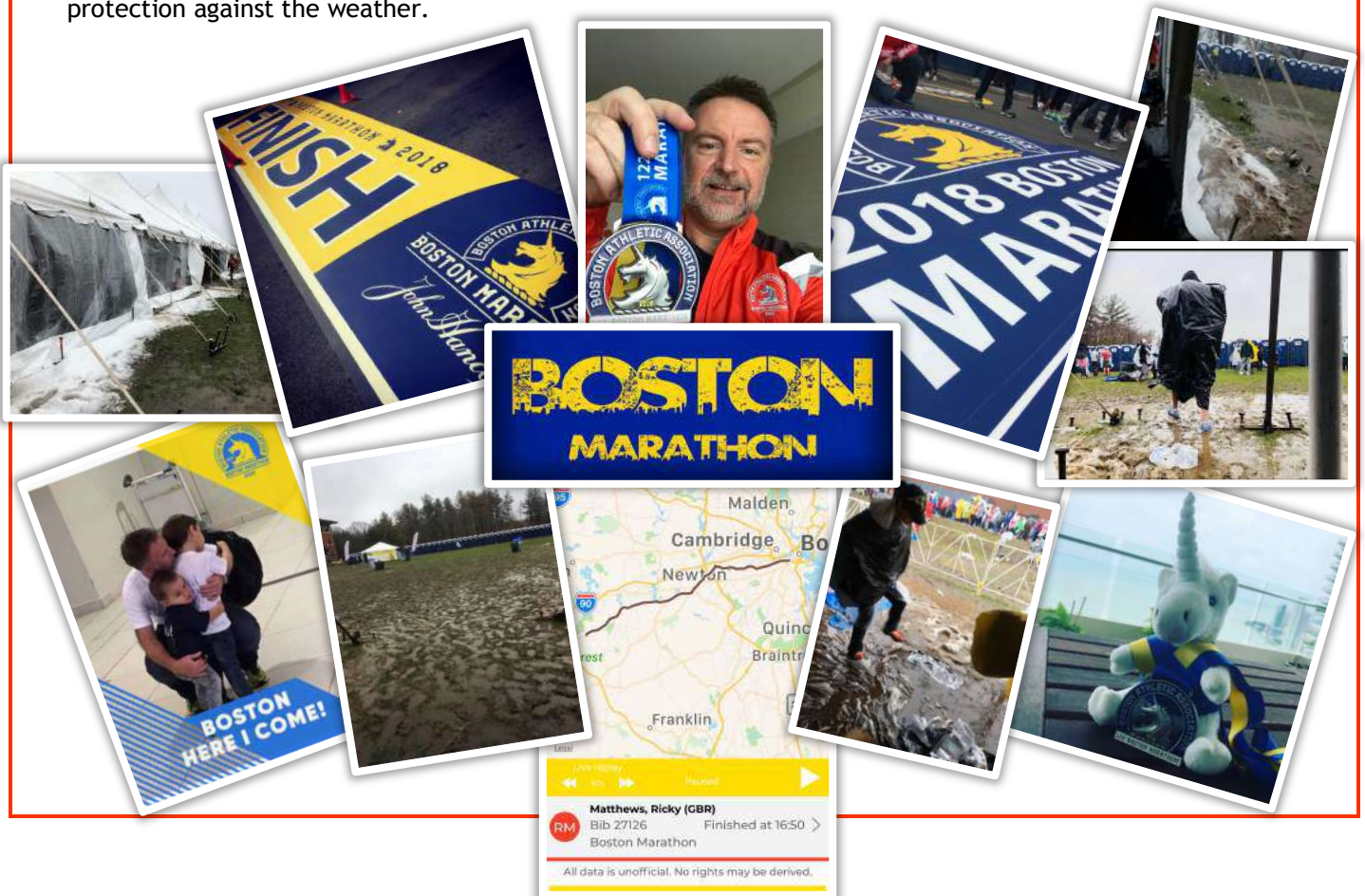
WHAT TO WEAR?

The forecast overnight was cold and wet, it was all about wearing layers. So Ricky decided to wear a large heavy cotton hoodie as protection against the cold. A baseball cap so the peak could keep the rain off his face.



He wore a skin tight compression top, covered by the Brooks sponsored “runRICKYrun” shirt. Brooks also provided the shorts (with compression inners) and GHOST 10 shoes.

Due to the wet conditions, extra lubrication would also be needed. Vaseline & “Bodyglide” were used in abundance. Preventative “blister plasters” were applied to the most prone areas of his feet. Getting ready Ricky could feel the excitement building inside of him. Conditions were not great but excited all the same.....



THE ATHLETE'S VILLAGE @ HOPKINTON



Ricky was expecting the Athletes Village to be wet but he was not really prepared for the slushy mud & snow that awaited him. Making the trek across the mud for the portaloo was horrendous and Ricky's feet were immediately cold as the icy mud soaked into the shoes. Not ideal preparation for the next 5 hours..!

Keeping warm and dry was a challenge if not already impossible. As we approached the corrals to line up we heard that it was a rolling start due to the brutal conditions (the organisers just wanted to keep everyone moving).

THE START.....

As I reached the start line I realised that I was now "running the Boston Marathon". The hairs on my neck stood on end - not sure if this was because I was cold or due to the excitement and adrenaline.

Throughout the race there was one common factor.... RAIN. Whether it was just "spitting" or whether it was like a "monsoon", it was raining throughout. The wind too, would be in your face like a wall at times. Especially with the poncho over my kit, it was a serious drag on speed.

I was conscious of starting steady and not too fast. From Hopkinton it was downhill for the first 6km and there were many runners in reasonably narrow roads. We exited Hopkinton and went through the towns of Ashland & Framlington and the first 10km was completed (1:05:34 chiptime).

THE COLD.....

The next 5km was reasonably flat and problem free (except for the persistent rain). I had already realised at this point that there was no point in trying to avoid the puddles as this would just add to the distance that I would need to run and I was already soaked through anyway. I would add at this point I felt reasonably warm (except for the bare skin of my legs which were completely exposed to the elements).

THE WIND.....

Running past the lake at the town of Natick was particularly windy as it was so open. I have been in typhoons in Japan many times but being outside and exposed to the wind at this point felt worse. I realised that the loose poncho was slowing me down, but also understood that it was also keeping the wind from my body too.

A SOUND DECISION?

As I knew that this would be running for at least 5 hours in these conditions I made the decision to retain the poncho for body heat.

Not sure this was the most efficient decision, but on hearing that over 2,400 runners sought medical treatment and 81 were taken to hospital during the race, it was a certainly a sound one.

HALFWAY...

My pace had slowed and the 20km chips time was 2:20:03. I was not doubting that I would finish but I was beginning to question if finishing in under 5 hours was going to be possible?

There was no break in the rain, the wind was still battering us and I was now beginning to feel a little chilly in the body - my face, hands and legs were cold.

WELLESLEY COLLEGE

Wellesley was one of the memorable parts of the course.

Don't get me wrong, there were people cheering throughout the race (even with the atrocious conditions), but at Wellesley College you can hear them, long before you can see them.



The college girls were out in force and cheering everyone. They had signs that read "My kiss will give you power" made me smile.

The "high 5's" and constant noise as we were making our way through was very motivational and for a brief moment, I was able to forget about the cold, wind and rain. I did enjoy that 800 meters or so (nearly as much as seeing the finish line later in the race).

THE RAIN.....

From the halfway point there are many inclines that seemed long rather than steep. The rain was relentless and on several occasions I actually said to myself "are you kidding me!" as I looked up to the heavens.

What I started to notice every undulation - uphill created tightness and pain in my right calf and downhill this pain eased.

SLOWING DOWN....

I noticed with the slowing down on the uphill that my pace had dropped. This was not helped by the fact that my heavy cotton hoodie was now a serious weight due to the rain. This and the coldness on my thighs was beginning to take its toll.

I noticed at this point that the medical tents were busy as I sauntered past.

I tried to lift my hoodie to see if I could afford to lose the extra layer. I jogged for around 500m with my midriff exposed. It was too cold. I decided the hoodie was there for the long haul and just keep myself as warm as possible...!

The challenge was to keep the body temperature up.

MESSAGE TO MUM...

25km-30km took us into the town of Newton and the famous hills. The steep downhill followed by 4 hills (the last of which is known as "Heartbreak Hill").

The crowds around Newton Fire Station did their best in the conditions to try to motivate the slower runners. The second hill was the hardest and I ended up walking for most of it due to the calf pain.

I did have some doubts at this point. I remember talking to my Mum and sending her a message via my GoPro. Saying how I hoped that she was ok in hospital and that I was thinking of her and that she was inspiring me to carry on running. I was motivated by my mothers brave fight with lung cancer. It was emotional, I have to admit it as it was on camera. But I think I can say that the rain was in my eyes, rather than tears ;-)

HEARTBREAK HILL....

Between 30km-35km we have the Heartbreak Hill. The strange thing is at this point I think I had zoned out.

I didn't want to let anyone down. This was the first leg of the runRICKYrun challenge and the conditions were brutal, but I had to finish. I had to reach Boylston.....

I kept thinking "Heartbreak is coming" it will get easier after that. "Downhill to Boston" as they say.

I lost track of the hills and was very surprised when I crested and a spectator shouted "well done, Heartbreak is behind you"..... I turned around and looked down the hill. I hadn't realised that I was climbing. Mentally I was busy thinking of my Mum and other things and just putting one foot in front of the other. Part of me was actually disappointed to have done this part of the course without really experiencing it.....

I do not think that this "hill" was too bad. Certainly in my opinion, the one after Newton Fire Station was more of a challenge.

This 5km was very challenging. Mentally I had faced a wall but kept going. My pace had dropped and I was not in the best of spirits but I was not giving up.

The 35km time was 4:33:37 due to the intermittent walking. At least it was now downhill to Boston.

THE CUTOFF....

I had to obtain the finish time within the cut off. I knew I had around 1 hour and 30 minutes to finish. I knew that even with brisk walking I could be within the cutoff. The rain was still relentless and at times monsoon like. The cold headwind was stronger after Heartbreak Hill and the body was feeling very cold. The pain in the calf was persistent with every step. The crowds were sporadic but still loud. The fact that they remained on the course, watching and cheering was impressive. I have run several major marathons with great crowd support, but in these weather conditions - I take my hat off to the Bostonians!

They "own" their race and want to make sure that you make it home and enjoy the experience.

THE CITGO SIGN.....



The cries of “GoGAP” - referring to my GAP hoodie - were a constant reminder from the crowd. Around 38km was the UNICEF support team, cheering us on, which was good to see.

My legs felt dead, the constant battle against the headwind, carrying the extra weight of sodden clothes, cold soaked feet, approaching 5 hours... it was the thoughts of charity, my mother, my family and supporters at home that kept me going.

We were now in Brookline - the finish was near...

4km to go, soon become 3km to go, I could see the CITGO sign in the distance. 40km time - 5:21:09

The CITGO sign is where there is 1 mile to go.

It was still raining.... It was still windy.....I was cold..... But I knew the end was near and although I was in pain I kept putting one foot in front of the other. Walking now was more regular. I can remember feeling very frustrated at this point as my training had gone well. Frustrated that I had been “delayed” by the weather and a calf problem. The lack of training in these weather conditions (which I could not have planned for) was also a factor for sure.

“RIGHT ON HEREFORD....LEFT ON BOYLSTON” - THE FINISH



Now we were at the point of turning “right on Hereford” which became a dodge the poncho exercise.... The road was a mess as the faster runners had left countless ponchos laying all along the streets. I really did not wish to be watching every step at this late stage but at the same time did not want to take a tumble.

“Left on Boylston” - finish in sight....

Making my way to the finish, amazingly my calf pain was non-existent (positive effects of adrenaline). I enjoyed the final moments on the course.

I knew it was slow. I knew it had been tough. I knew I would never run in these conditions again.

But I also knew it hadn't beaten me. I knew that I was finishing and becoming a Boston Marathoner...!

I swore when I crossed the finish line - sorry! I blame the emotion, frustration and excitement. Chip time 5:40:44

This was my 14th marathon and also my slowest.

The walk from the finish line I began to think about all the positives.

The heat tech blanket provided post marathon was great. The medal will be a constant reminder to this battle.

There are many positives though - Thanking the countless volunteers that gave up their Monday holiday in the rain to support 30,000 crazy people. Thanking the police for helping to keep everyone safe. Thanking the medical teams who were there for so many.

I have so many memories of the run (thanks to GoPro) that will live with me through the rest of the runRICKYrun project.

I am sure that this will have been the hardest challenge that I will face over this year. It will no doubt be the coldest and wettest I have been (there's a challenge for Mother Nature).



The Next “BIG” Events.....



9th September 2018

Ricky has been invited to represent “*teamGB*” in the games being held in Penang, Malaysia.

Ricky is delighted to be running at this unique event and although a podium finish is out of the question it will be an honour to run for the Great Britain team.



16th September 2018

Ricky will be running in the 45th Berlin Marathon in September. This will be Ricky's 15th full marathon.

This event is the 2nd event of the 6 Abbots World Majors. The target charity for this race will be **Macmillan Cancer Support**.



7th October 2018

Coming just 3 weeks after Berlin will be the **Chicago Marathon**.

This event is the 3rd event of the Abbots World Majors. The target charity for this race will be **Ronald McDonald Housing Charities - RMHC**



RUN RICKY RUN

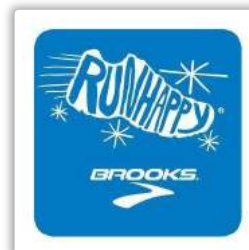
BOSTON ★ BERLIN ★ CHICAGO ★ NEW YORK ★ TOKYO ★ LONDON

Sponsors & Supporters of.....



IFA-ASIA are proud platinum sponsors of the **runRICKYrun** project.

Ricky is proud to wear the **runRICKYrun** kit that is fully provided by **BrooksRunningMY**.



The **Running Plan** have kindly provided the training schedule for the **runRICKYrun** project and ongoing support and advice.



The **Montreux Group** have generously provided a large donation to **UNICEF** on behalf of the **runRICKYrun** project.



The UK Property Investment company **Prosperity Wealth** have provided a sizeable donation to **UNICEF** of behalf of the **runRICKYrun** project.



Ricky was appointed as an Ambassador for **HOWEI** in Malaysia and is often running in their events in Penang & Kuala Lumpur.



The Malaysian practice of **Asia Physio** provide the medical support and advice to Ricky through this project.



The **runRICKYrun** Project - raising money for Charities through the completion of the **Abbots World Marathon Majors**.

If you would like to support the **runRICKYrun** project, please contact ricky@ifa-asia.com

If you wish to donate click HERE: www.runRICKYrun.net/wish-to-donate/