**World Masters Championships, Perth Australia – October 2016**

**Ben Reynolds report**

**M50 5000 metres - Gold**

Woke up to squally rain showers – and it was cold!  Definitely not what was in the brochure.  I hadn’t packed for this.  Things perked up a bit by the afternoon but it was still very windy and rather chilly.  I had a lot of time to kill at the stadium and I restlessly searched for somewhere dry, warm and sheltered, eventually choosing to lie down in the men’s changing rooms.   Checked my pulse – 42 – not sure whether that was a good thing or a bad thing.

I watched the older boys battle the wind and concluded this was not a day for honest, brave leadership.  With hip numbers fastened they marched us in numeric order to the start only to let us do some strides down the back straight so that they had to repeat the numeric roll call to get us back in order.  Long pause while we waited for the tail end of the previous race to finish.  An Argentinean was walking his last lap (he finished in almost 28 mins – what is that all about?).

Off we go and a bit of scramble to the first bend.  Bashir Hussain (he of Stockport Harriers fame with an illustrious past) went out like a madman and had 10m on us after 200m.  He then went backwards until he dropped out.  Meanwhile I was relieved that Anders Dahl (SWE) took the lead at a reasonable pace and I took up my station in his slipstream.  Bruce Graham (AUS) sheltered behind me.  They were both medallists in the x-c earlier in the week so I knew they were the competition.  Anders got a bit cheesed off that he was doing all the work so veered out into lane 2 on a couple of laps to encourage me to take over.  I’m afraid to say I followed him into lane 2 and would have followed him to lane 9 had he been in any doubt.  He got the message and put his nose back to the g.

I’m told we dropped the rest of the field after about 4 laps.  I had my big-race head screwed on and avoided the distraction of checking my time or worrying about what the others were up to.  I was vaguely aware that they screwed up the lap counter for about 4 laps.  It conflicted with the electronic counter but they got back in synch eventually.  I was more concerned with chopping my stride to avoid clipping Anders’s heel.

4 laps to go and I thought I should probably make a move - but 4 home straits into the wind seemed a tall order.  I prevaricated.

3 laps to go and I thought I should probably make a move – but again thought better of it.

Eventually with 1,100m to go I sort of drifted onto Anders’ shoulder and then finally mind and body got in synch and I picked things up.  I’m told there was no response from Anders or Bruce and I quickly opened up 30m.  I never looked round but was pretty sure they were nowhere near.  I could hear the commentator and there was nothing to indicate any danger.  I think I took the bell in 14.42 and thought a sub-78 would get me under 16 into respectable territory.  I fear my legs had other ideas and I was rather distressed to see the clock tick over 16 as I crossed with line with rather wobbly legs.

Lots of very nice post-race comments from strangers who it seems had enjoyed seeing a rare change of pace.   Got my quokka (western Australian rodent cuddly toy) at the medal ceremony where I still have no idea what to do with myself during the national anthem (a slow and stately version).

Now for the 10,000m on Tuesday where I think the medallists are likely to be the same.

Event 377  M50 5000 Meter Run

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         WMA: R 14:53.20

    Name                     Age Team                    Finals  H#

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Finals

  1 Reynolds, Ben            M52 Great Britai          16:01.64   2

  2 Dahl, Anders             M51 Sweden                16:13.66   2

  3 Graham, Bruce            M54 Australia             16:14.40   2

  4 Anderson, Simon          M52 Great Britai          16:29.46   2

  5 Atkinson, James          M50 Australia             16:32.69   2

  6 Stevens, Peter           M52 New Zealand           16:46.32   2

  7 Burdett, Francis         M51 United State          16:50.21   2

  8 McGregor, Shane          M50 Australia             17:13.78   2

  9 Quilty, Sean             M50 Australia             17:16.05   2

10 Cossey, Blair            M51 New Zealand           17:26.67   2

**M50 10,000 metres - Silver**

After the 5,000m I was fairly confident I could beat the people I knew about in the 10,000m but there was a late arrival in the start list from Kenya who was an unknown quantity.  I was a little worried about that.

Conditions were much more Perth-like: cloudless blue sky and bright sunshine.  Now the challenge was to find shade.

Pre-race, the Kenyan contingent were enjoying themselves in their enviably nice uniform kit, and were popular inclusions in the inevitable selfies.

Dave Sweeney (now AUS but formerly Shaftesbury) showed how things should be done with a fine solo 33:15 run in the V55 race.

It was a crowded start line with over 20 of us but the race soon settled down with the predicted players to the fore.  The Swede and Aussie from the 5k, me and the Kenyan.  Some games were played on the first couple of laps as various people found themselves at the front and didn’t fancy it.  The Kenyan irritated me by surging to the front and then almost stopping with a grin much to the amusement of his supporters.  Provoked I went to the front and stayed there for the next 20 laps.  Probably a bit stupid with hindsight.  We dropped the Swede and the Aussies before too long but the Kenyan stayed on my heel like glue.  There was a Brit supporter down the back straight who intoned with monotonous regularity “he’s still there”.

I decided to put in an effort with 5 and 3 laps to go.  My ‘effort’ with 5 to go didn’t amount to much.  The 78 second lap had no effect at all.  As I started to repeat the effort with 3 to go, the Kenyan came flying past me.  Dismayed, I’m afraid to say that my ‘effort’ evaporated and the merciless clock shows I only ran a 81 second lap.  Rather poor.  I raised my game a little with a 75 second last lap to keep the gap respectable but my legs were wobbly and weak.  Kibet won in 33.12 and I was 2nd in 33.20

Reflecting on the race now, I’m disappointed I didn’t respond better with 3 laps to go.  I don’t recall feeling I was giving it my all.  I find that easier to do on the roads for some reason but the track is a funny place and I find my legs lose power even though the rest of the body seems to have something in hand.  33:20 is slower than both my road 10k’s this year and I feel I could have run the race smarter but I am pleased to have medaled.

10,000m Finals

1 Kibet, Yego Paul M51 Kenya 33:13.34

2 Reynolds, Ben M52 Great Britai 33:19.16

3 Graham, Bruce M54 Australia 33:48.89

 4 Meagher, John M53 Australia 34:24.31

 5 Dahl, Anders M51 Sweden 34:51.96

6 Burdett, Francis M51 United State 35:55.09

7 Monteiro, António Alexan M50 Portugal 36:27.92

 8 Cossey, Blair M51 New Zealand 36:42.20

 9 Fraser, Ian M51 Great Britai 38:32.82

 10 Viney, Paul M54 Australia 39:40.23

11 Rohregger, Robert M52 Germany 40:21.62

 12 Angell, Dean M54 Great Britai 41:12.71

13 Gibbons, Chris M52 Australia 41:45.12

 14 Anderson, Simon M52 Great Britai 42:56.55

15 Gallagher, Saul M50 Great Britai 43:49.38

16 Dyer, George M52 Australia 45:35.86

 17 Roberts, Alan M52 Great Britai 46:25.46

18 Sharma, Jeet Ram M54 India 58:35.10

19 Serraino, Juan Adolfo M53 Argentina 1:01:10.42

-- Hollinshead, Christopher M50 Great Britai DNF

The Aussie’s partner posted a video of the 5,000m here

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PzTIG7MShrs>

And of the 10,000m here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PN4oyjNqvMM>

See you at the Kent Vets in December.

Ben