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I'd like to start the final newsletter for 2007 by thanking all of the schools, businesses, organizations, parents, clients and individuals that have supported my Peak Fitness Challenge events, Team Rex programs, and Personal Training services in 2007. I know I can't thank you all but it's truly appreciated.

For those that have been doing the Boxing for Fitness programs with me over the past 3 months, don't let yourself go now (some tips in this issue to help with that) as new programs will be beginning in late January- we'll keep you informed.

Finally, merry Christmas to all of the newsletter readers, I hope it's a safe and joyous one. I'm looking to an exciting 2008 with some small changes and growth planned for the new year.

Dale Ringin



Anaconda Adventure Race

Well, I and the rest of the Peak Fitness Challenge team members (teams Hooganvargan, Masters & Apprentices, Bursting & FOM, Tri 2 Cycle, and Racing Pigeons) survived the Anaconda Adventure Race for another year!

There were some great team and individual efforts from the guys and girls competing under the Peak Fitness Challenge banner. You can check out our race report, times and more photos at:
www.psfs.com.au/district_services.php

Thank-you to The Athlete's Foot Geelong for supplying us with the t-shirts, friends & family who there on the day and leading up to the event and to Bryce for pulling the team members together to get in and have a go! For the records, I did the 11.2km run in 1.25 hours and 23km ride in 1.56 hours (including transition time) and 2.8km beach run in 21 minutes.

Photos above: Top- me chasing hard across the rocks after another competitor, Second top- a big down hill coming up on the bike (think I got off there!), Second bottom- some of the team in our TAF t-shirts at the Lorne Pub, Bottom- those fun loving rocks again!



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TEAM REX

Over 8 weeks in Term 4 we have continued our tradition of operating Team Rex programs for Prep. to Grade 2 students at both Kardinia International College and Newtown Primary School.

At Kardinia International College we operated the Team Triumph program for the 2nd year in a row, adding in a new sport and varying some of the games. There were 31 students enrolled in the program and all participants received a medallion on completion of the 8 weeks.

The Newtown PS program finished with 18 enrolments and was based around throwing/catching skills but lead into modified versions of cricket/baseball. The Ball Bonanza program was the very first program we operated at Newtown PS in 2004, however, the most recent version included some striking games throwing and catching.

A committed and adaptive role was also played by Luke and Elise to keep the programs rolling along (with some additional help from Kieren and Robbie)– well done guys!

ACHPER Conference



Left–
instructions to the
group.



Right – the four
way ladder relay.

This year I presented a session (along with having our trade display) at the annual ACHPER (Australian Council for Health, Physical Education & Recreation) conference. The conference is held every year over two days at Monash University Clayton, however, I only presented on Thursday 30th November. The session was titled “Peak Fitness Challenge: Innovative fitness ideas for primary teachers” and was designed to showcase some of the more innovative fitness equipment and the variety of uses they have. The aim of the session was to also give the teachers a work out but inspire them to take some of the activities back to their schools to educate and enthuse their students about personal fitness. Thanks to Ben, Steve, Kelly and Rob for giving me a hand over the two days.



Left– the army lad-
der run in action.



Right– the reaction
ball chase was on.



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PEAK FITNESS CHALLENGE™

The November/December months have been fantastic for the PFC with sessions being operated at 2 schools that have never been involved in the challenge and a third school that was having their first attempt at an On Campus Program session:

The 2nd Melton Primary Schools Sports Association challenge operated on Wednesday 14th November at the Melton Indoor Recreation Centre. 270 students from six Melton area schools participated with Melton Secondary College taking on officiating duties. This year's challenge was won by Kurunjang PS with both the fittest boy and fittest girl also hailing from Kurunjang PS.

On 15th & 16th of November we ventured to Strathfieldsaye PS in Bendigo to run Mini PFC's for both the Grade 5/6 and 3/4 students. It was a hot one on both days but the brilliant "carport style structure" over the basketball courts allowed the students, parents and staff all to work in comfort. All of the students were enthusiastic about their very first challenge and Gold House (in the 5/6 area) along with Green House (in the 3/4 area) were the winners on the day. A big thank-you to David Taylor for his professionalism, organizational skills and support of the challenge over the two days.

St Anthony's PS (Melton) continued on the busy month of November with a PFC Tabloid for Grade 3-6 students on Monday 26th November. It was a big day for the challenge as it was the first time one had ever operated without me being onsite (I actually let go of the reins!). However, the trusty combination of Rob and Kieren made sure the day ran smoothly. Thanks to Peter La Franchi for his patience and eagerness to get an On Campus Program at his school, we look forward to working with the school again in 2008.

After just over a year of communicating back and forth about dates we finally made it to Narre Warren North PS to conduct a Mini PFC. PE teacher Alan Campbell runs a great PE/Sport program and we were wrapped to be able to work with his students. The heat and flies made for difficult working conditions but there were no complaints from competitors, staff or parents and the challenge ran smoothly.

The third and final PFC Tabloid for Newtown PS was run on a hot December morning. Students from Sacred Heart College gave up their own time (they were already on holidays!) to officiate the challenge. The Cross Ladder Grab and Horseshoe Hurdle were also introduced as timed events which saw some "new faces" collect ribbons at the end of the challenge. Thank-you once again to Quentin Pritchard (for inviting us back) and the whole Newtown PS school community for supporting the challenge.

PFC News:

Unfortunately, prices have to go up (I'd love to be able to reduce costs per head, something for me to work on) as increased rises in stadium hire costs along with petrol prices (and a number of other operational costs) have forced us to review the pricing structure for 2008 Interschool Events. Schools that had participated in the challenge over the last 2 years were given four options in relation to a changed price per student. I'm truly grateful to those teachers (especially at report writing time) who responded as I felt it was extremely important to gain feedback before making any decisions. Based on the feedback received, **all Interschool Events will now be priced based on the individual area and costs associated** rather than a flat rate (as has been the case for the last 3 years). As of next year the **minimum number for the challenges to operate will be 220 participants**. This number is not only based on viability but verbal feedback from a number of teachers in relation to "ideal operational" numbers. We're also aiming to be able to provide schools with all results (raw and points) from the day and looking to add more activity for students not competing. **New prices will be posted on the website in 2008.**



Sporty Spot- Brett Gardner



This month we profile PE teacher Brett Gardner. Brett has been PE Teacher (Head of Primary Sport & PE) at Mowbray College (Melton) for the past 8 years. Prior to working at Mowbray Brett taught at Melbourne Grammar (Outdoor Education Department), Kismet Park PS and Exford PS. He's also been the past president/secretary of the Melton Primary Schools Sports Association and instrumental in helping us to establish the Peak Fitness Challenge in the Melton region.

On the sporting front Brett has recently played cricket at Woodend Cricket Club, winning five 1st Grade cricket premierships and football at Woodend Heskett Football Club as a member of their 2002 senior premiership team.

After Christmas Brett will move to Thailand to take up a teaching position at the International School of the Regents, Chonburi. He's looking forward to the challenge and experience with his wife and youngest daughter. Brett hopes that he has contributed to the Mowbray and Melton District's sporting development throughout his time and looks forward to seeing bigger and better things upon his return in a couple of years.

Maintaining your Fitness over the festive season



The festive season can create difficulties in maintaining (or starting) a fitness program. The main thing is to remember that we are all human (so we do need to relax and enjoy ourselves at this time of year) but keep the bigger picture in mind and don't overdo the eating and drinking. Here are simple ideas that may help you keep on track and maintain/improve your fitness.

- Use it as the start of a new program– it can be hard to maintain the regular routine with possible work, family and travel commitments at this time of year. So don't try to do too much but make sure you are exercising regularly as the beginning of a new program.
 - Find a fun run/walk to enter– there are plenty on at this time of year over varied distances, it can be a great social outing to get family and friends involved in.
 - Don't exercise out of guilt– if you do happen to overindulge or miss an exercise session then don't punish yourself at the other end, maintain a regular and long term approach to your fitness.
 - Set a schedule based around your Christmas/New Year timetable and use those holidays as recovery days.
 - Remember to stay well hydrated before/during/after exercise, especially due to increased heat and festive season drinks
 - Take opportunity to walk or ride to visit family or friends or even start up your own running or walking group (having others to help you with motivation is important at this time of year).
 - Incorporate family into your exercise routine, you may be able to have more fun with the workout if more are involved (even a new Christmas tradition could be born!).
 - Use it as an opportunity to try something different in your exercise program e.g. Try a new class at the gym, vary your program sets/reps/weights, do a group personal training session.
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