



Series AMBASSADOR – Hannah Madge

1. Tell us a little bit about yourself?

Hi! My name is Hannah. I am 29 years old. I live in Doncaster East with my mum Melissa and partner Josh who is also an avid trail runner. I work full-time as an Occupational Therapist in community aged care where I visit older adults in their home enabling them to better manage their healthcare. I started trail running with Josh along the single track beside the Yarra River in Bulleen where I would alternate walking 100m/ jogging 100m, with a few tears in between. I now consider myself a 'middle of the pack, don't leave the trail without a new friend' kind of runner.



2. What is your favourite trail running location and why?

I enjoy the fast undulating single track at the You Yang's National Park (I cannot wait for restrictions to lift and the park to reopen). Flinders' Peak gives you quick elevation, and there are so many different loops or figure 8's you can create from the car park. Mount Macedon is beautiful but can get pretty cold. Closer to home the Yarra Bend Trail is also a favourite.

3. Have you done the Trail Running Series before and if yes what do you love about it?

Yes I first entered the series in 2016. I have amazing memories of Plenty gorge muddy hill climbs and river crossings. The Trail Running Series is a great way to explore local Melbourne trails. It gave me confidence to mix up my training in order to return to the trails. It is great motivation to be training towards a goal, and the encouragement of fellow runners and volunteers helps you push to do your best. When I entered the series I aimed to increase distances each time.

4. How is your training going, anything to pass on to others? How have you been training through the Social Distancing measures?

Like everyone else, my training has had a bit of a shakeup with race cancellations and social distancing. Initially my weekly KM's increased as I felt like I had nothing else to do and went a bit crazy. I then started setting goals to build up to; running my postcode (3109), a virtual half and then full marathon around my local area. Setting more immediate personalised goals is giving my training some structure. I would also recommend trying to resist increasing your training too much. As much as I love running, I still find for me personally, if I do more than 4 runs per week I pull up sore. Try and mix up your training with a bike ride or body weight exercises.



5. What inspires you to run? Why do you do it?

I run because I enjoy being outdoors and spending the weekend exploring new places with Josh. I run to prove to myself that I can accomplish something that I believed was impossible. I like to meet new people, reminisce, share my adventures and trail stories afterwards, and celebrate with cheese and wine! And who doesn't love runners high?!

6. You obviously love exploring and taking the 'unknown path'. Why is that and how does trail running help you achieve that?

Trail running allows me to see a place from another perspective. Running deep into the bush (with GPS tracking so we don't get lost), along an isolated beach, up a snow peak or along a cliff face is not something I would experience without running. I would never have had the opportunity to see stunning plants, or amazing animals sitting on and around the trails. Now, Josh and I typically plan holidays around a race or trail we want to explore. Some of our recent holidays included Marysville and California.

7. Can you describe your most memorable run.

Two Bays 2019 was my second and Josh's first attempt at an Ultra Marathon. I had run in the 26km event the year before and watched Lucy (Josh's sister) win the event the year before. I was inspired to give it a shot! It was a beautiful warm summer day, the views of the beach and the atmosphere was incredible.

My brother Jordan, and his girlfriend Whitney had come to watch their first ever trail run and support me along the way. I hi-fived Josh as we passed going down/up Arthurs Seat, and Ash (Josh's Dad) was out on course with ice cold water. I tried to stay hydrated and fuelled as I approached the halfway mark only 10 minutes ahead of cut off, it was a race against the clock! As I arrived at each aid station I was losing time and couldn't take in any food.

At the 50km mark I was only 1 minute under cut off and I knew I would have to push to make the final 6km in the remaining time. I crossed the line in 7 hours 56 minutes, 4 minutes before the 8-hour cut off.

That day Josh and I became ultra-marathon runners together!



8. What is your favourite post-race food?!

Cheese and wine!