

## DALE'S DEMONS *Manal Garcia and Leigh MacRitchie*

### Manal

3 years ago, Dale approached a few of us after a 10k race in Lane Cove and mentioned these illusive reps. These sounded interesting so a few of us thought we'd give them a go. Little did I know how addictive they would be. Initially we slogged through 8 x 1km repeats, then a few months later Dale decided 8 didn't cut it and from then on we tackled 10 of these nasty buggers.

The name Dale's Demons came about somewhere in the early sessions. The "Demon" really is our sadistic coach Dale who takes great pleasure in inflicting our weekly torture, blowing her whistle and shouting out at us as we enter the last 20 metres. Being a trainer myself I fully understand this pleasure.

There's something special about your clients/participants giving everything to the session and ultimately to you. It's all about challenging and empowering yourself. We love it or we wouldn't return. A ritual of the end of session photo also emerged early on and thanks to social media our numbers have grown and grown (so have our silly poses). Socially we are a tight bunch. Full of encouragement as we pass each other on the course and the last rep always gets the loudest cheers. Coffee after is a bonus if you can make it. Many new and lasting friendships have formed.

Sure you'd expect improvements in times, fitness and stamina but more so, these sessions are what the running community is all about; encouragement - no matter what level you are at, friendship and support.

Dale selflessly gives her time and expertise free of charge 3 out of 4 Saturdays every month. I know we are all grateful for this community she's created. Personally this torture is one of my weekly highlights in my running life!



**Leigh**

I first heard of Dales Demons last year ... I was inspired by the photos on the FB page of everyone looking so fit and strong after a tough training session. This fun training regime is hard work as Dale Thompson is a tough task master – I agree Dale is the real Demon.

Dale organises the groups in a military style order - run 1km repeat - 1 min rest or water break and back again until you have at least completed between 8- 10km laps. No sympathy from Dale - if after the 6th or 7th lap you want a longer water break Dales says “back to work”.

This training group has been fun and a huge challenge at the same time as the course at Lane Cove has quite a few hills and effectively pacing your laps is sometimes more than a contest. However, It is the Demon buddies who turn up to the training each week offering encouragement and support who make this training exciting. We sometimes reward our hard work by going out for breakfast or coffee.

This type of speed work has been great for me, achieving a few PB's in the 10km series and half marathons. It was also excellent for marathon training too as I improved my time significantly in this year's Sydney Marathon...

Who knew!

