

# the toilet roll

(that's not to say this article is full of c\*\*\*)

## Monegetti Twilight - still holding bright



A couple of weeks back I found myself running at dusk along one of my favourite trails. The track passes through woodland, then opens out to a clearing which looks over the city. As I hit the opening I was met with the most awesome sunset. It was one of those times when you have a 'moment'. Reflection was thrust upon me like a healthy dose of calomine lotion onto a kid with chicken pox. And what does an obsessive compulsive runner reflect upon.....what else, running!

Somehow through running and the experience of the setting sun I found myself thinking about Mona - Stephen James Moneghetti, arguably our greatest ever marathon man. Why think about him? I guess the sunset, his career coming to a close, running, idols, inspiration.....whatever the segway, it made me start to clarify in my own mind what exactly Mona has offered to the sport of distance running. It also made me think about what he still has to offer, and is offering.

I'm aware that recently Mona has been criticized by some idiots for apparently going against his retirement call. Yes, although having officially retired from international competition, he is still

Mona, his career, his humility, his competitiveness, his friendliness, his participation should be savoured and used as inspiration by all who tread the path of putting one foot in front of the other. Why does he keep going? I guess you'd have to ask him, but I'm betting his answer would be somewhere along the lines that, just like you and I, he loves everything that comes with being a distance runner. It's how he identifies himself in this world full of directionless people. Why should he stop doing so just because he's over 40, or has been quoted at some stage as being 'retired'? And

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competing in national class events at a highly competitive level. Shock horror!! Just in the last couple of months he's managed to come third in the Sydney Morning Herald Half Marathon, and win the Victorian 10km Road Champs. And certain factions of the distance running community have taken offence to this, claiming that Mona is making a mockery of others. They suggest that his turning up to events, smacking the nations best up, whilst giving the impression that he's retired and not even trying anymore is not great for the self esteem of his fellow competitors! At last years City to Surf he had the audacity to wear a microphone and commentate, while still being the fastest Australian to complete the course. Well boo-hoo!

I haven't heard so much crap in all my life and I don't think all the toilet roll articles that will be written over the preceding editions will be enough to wipe up the abundance of it!

maybe, just maybe, there's a small part of him that as Pat Carroll recently pointed out, 'just loves being Steve Moneghetti'.

So, just like the Democrats, who were formed to keep the bastards honest, let's embrace the magnificent sunset of a wonderful career by a truly inspirational Aussie competitor. Mona is keeping our nations elite distance runners on their toes. And for all the thousands of others who run for whatever reason, they can say they ran in a race against that legend of our sport, Moneghetti.

For those who think he should just stop showing up, I think you're just embarrassed about being whipped by a veteran. And for everyone else, don't be scared to say hi to Mona.....I can guarantee that after he has met you, Mona will remember your name!

PS Please don't run in the City to Surf this year Mona, I was hoping to finish in the top 10.

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