

DIARY: 2004

[January - March: In LA for Gavin's rehabilitation]

March 23

P K Tao dies [Physics teacher, colleague for a while at CU, worked with him on HKASME]

APRIL

13 Saturday

Arrived in HK on time at about noon. A woman passenger nearby on the Seoul to HK leg sneezing into a newspaper a lot of the time. Arrived back at the hotel at about 1:30 pm. To TST briefly in the evening.

14 Sunday

Slept in! Didn't get up until 1 pm! Later, started to feel ill with fever and diarrhoea, the same symptoms that Gavin had. Very lethargic.

15 Monday

Not feeling any better. Sorted and re-organised books in the morning. Actually went to the gym and did ½ hour on the treadmill but very slowly - only 10 kph. In bed most of the rest of the day.

16 Tuesday

Feeling slightly better. Got materials out but didn't actually do any work. Again to the gym for a light but longish weights workout. Still eating very little food.

17 Wednesday

Feeling a lot better. Did a little work on the Brunei TRB 5. Again ½ hour on the treadmill (11+ kph) followed by 600 m in the pool. (Pool opened for the season today; water temperature about 24°C.) Also did shopping in the supermarket. In the evening, cooked my first meal [on returning from the US].

18 Thursday

Worked on the TRB for Brunei P5. Gym and swim in the afternoon.

19 Friday

Still overcast. To the CU clinic in the morning to see the dentist and the doctor. Slow treadmill run (10 kph) and a swim in the afternoon. E-mail from Gavin says he will become a US citizen tomorrow (?today). The president and vice-president of Taiwan slightly injured when shot during the final election rally.

20 Saturday

Hike around the Tai Lam Chung area across to Ho Pui reservoir - mainly walking. President Chen of Taiwan re-elected by just 29 000 votes.

21 - 23 Sunday - Tuesday

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24 Wednesday

Met Macmillan editor to pick up Education department comments on book [?which book].

25 Thursday

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26 Friday

My birthday - again! Dinner at the Bistro in Kwai Fong in the evening.

27 Saturday

Cooler and some drizzle. Hike in the Tai Lam Chung area. TST in the evening. Watched some of the HK Rugby 7s on TV in the afternoon.

28 Sunday

Long sleep in. Most of the rest of the day spent watching the Rugby 7s on TV. NZ knocked out in the semi-finals; beaten by Argentina - again!

29 Monday

Cooler, about 20°C. Peter Ustinov dies.

30 Tuesday

Treadmill run; about 12.9 kph over 30 minutes. Alistair Cooke dies, aged 95.

31 Wednesday

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MAY

1 Thursday

Rainy. Run - 13 kph! No swim as pool closed due to a thunderstorm.

2 Friday

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3 Saturday

Last hours for Gavin in the LA apartment.

4 - 12 Sunday - Monday

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13 Tuesday

Moscow Circus troupe check in in out hotel. Run about 13 kph.

14 Wednesday

Met a tiger trainer from the circus at the gym.

15 Thursday

Run: 13.2 kph over the 30 minutes.

16 - 21 Friday - Wednesday

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22 Thursday

Big explosion at a railway station in North Korea; electric wires ignite dynamite. In the evening, had to take a puff of Ventolin, the first for a long time!

23 Friday

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24 Saturday

Not excessively hot so went for a run in the Tai Lan Chung area.

25 Sunday

ANZAC day.

26 Monday

China announces that HK can not choose its CE and legislature in 2007/2008 by universal suffrage!

17 - 28 Tuesday - Wednesday

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29 Thursday

Got the safe in the suite removed! [occupying too much space and not really needed]

30 Friday

A fleet of Chinese warships arrives in HK for about six days. A 20/20 programme on the appalling state of some VA facilities in the US.

MAY

1 - 2 Saturday - Sunday

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3 Monday

Nearly 3000 machine guns found in transit from Malaysia to Oakland.

4 - 5 Tuesday - Wednesday

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6 Thursday

50 years ago today (also a Thursday) when Roger Bannister ran the first sub four-minute mile.

7 Friday

Another 50th anniversary; the surrender of the French at Dien Bien Phu in Vietnam.

8 Saturday

Black thunderstorm warning raised at about 7:30 am for the first time this year. Went for a run; the rain gradually decreased.

9 Sunday

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10 Monday

RTHK's Michael Rippon dies. Have diarrhoea in the evening.

11 - 14 Tuesday - Friday

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15 Saturday

Temperature up to about 30°C but went for a run. Hot!

16 - 17 Sunday - Monday

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18 Tuesday

Returned the wall painting in the suite to the hotel so that I could hang up my picture of the CUHK Faculty of Education [given to me from my department when I retired].

19 Wednesday

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20 Thursday

Gavin has his hernia operation (Wednesday, CA time); lasts for three hours.

21 Friday

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22 Saturday

Run not so good as very humid. Later, watched on TV the final of the Super 12 Rugby; the Brumbies beat the Crusaders 47 - 38. having led by 33 - 0 after just 18 minutes.

23 - 25 Sunday - Tuesday

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26 Wednesday

Public holiday for Buddha's birthday. A bone, supposedly from his finger, on display in HK. Call from Gavin in the afternoon.

27 - 29 Thursday - Saturday

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30 Sunday

5000 - 6000 in a march to commemorate the June 4th 'incident'.

31 Monday

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JUNE

1 - 3 Tuesday - Thursday

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4 Friday

Candlelight vigil at Victoria Park for the June 4th massacre. Larger turnout than in previous years.

5 Saturday

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6 Sunday

The 60th anniversary of the D-Day landings in Normandy. For President Reagan dies.

7 Monday

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8 Tuesday

Transit of Venus across the Sun occurs, the first time for 122 years. Watched it on the internet, broadcast by the HK Space Museum. Skipped the swim after gym today.

9 Wednesday

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10 Thursday

The Yuen Long crocodile is finally caught!

11 - 18 Friday - Friday

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19 Saturday

In Auckland, the All Blacks beat England 36 - 12 in the second test. Have a massage. [?]

20 Sunday

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21 Monday

Felt dizzy and sweaty during weight training today. Due to the Nuclin tablet I took last night?? Due to exhaustion??

22 Tuesday

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23 Wednesday

Hot weather continues. Did weight training followed by a one mile swim (27 laps); felt easy, but maybe a little too far.

24 - 27 Thursday - Sunday

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28 Monday

Hot again - about 33°C. To the dental hygienist at CU. Authority handed over from the US to an interim Iraqi authority - two days early in case of terrorist action.

29 Tuesday

Temperatures around this area up to 37°C!. Pool water temperature 34°C!

30 Wednesday

Gym rowing: 600 m about 24' 52" at 2:04.4 / 500 m.

JUNE

1 Thursday

Public holiday. Protest march in HK; about 530 000 involved. Saddam Hussein indicted in court today.

2 - 5 Friday - Monday

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6 Tuesday

New keyless lock put on the door. Treadmill run at 13.2 kph or 8.25 mph. Watched a TV documentary on the LAPD. SARS report comes out today.

7 Wednesday

E K Yeoh, Minister of Health, resigns as a result of the SARS report.

8 - 9 Thursday - Friday

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10 Saturday

ABs beat Pacific Islanders 41 - 26 in a torrid game. Taxi to TST, at the hotel's expense, as the mini-bus had a flat tyre. Watched the "Aqua Fantasia" display behind the Kowloon clock tower.

11 - 12 Sunday - Monday

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13 Tuesday

A 'major' cleaning of the suite today, including a carpet shampoo [done every 3 or 4 months].

14 Wednesday

Phone call from Nadine asking for more money to be sent! Rowing: 6000 m @ 2:03.6 / 500 m.

15 Thursday

Two Mossad agents jailed in NZ for trying to get NZ passports. The NZ government imposes diplomatic sanctions on Israel.

16 - 25 Friday - Wednesday

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26 Thursday

Leonie leaves Durban and spends much of the day in Johannesburg with the Dewars. In the evening, she leaves for London.

27 - 28 Friday - Saturday

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29 Sunday

Leonie should leave London for Boston today (I think). Ordered an electronic piano.

30 - 31 Monday - Tuesday

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SEPTEMBER

1 Wednesday

On my way back from the pool, came upon fire engines an ambulance and police outside the hotel; there was a fire in a 9th floor suite; the sprinkler system in the room activated..

Everyone had to wait in the lobby until it had been put out. This was the first fire since the hotel opened.

2 Thursday

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3 Friday

Bloody end to the school hostage seize in Beslan, Russia. Over 350, more than half of whom were pupils, died.

4 Saturday

Digital piano arrives.

5 Sunday

Olympic gold medallists from China arrive in the territory to demonstrate their skills.

Bloodworm saga in swimming pools may be near its end!

6 Monday

A mini tornado at the airport during a thunderstorm early evening; one aircraft damaged from flying freight.

7 Tuesday

Show in HK Stadium for China's Olympic gold medallists.

8 Wednesday

No swim -- pool closed because of 'thunderstorm' just when I wanted to use it! Performances in Hong Kong by Chinese gold-medallist swimmers.

9 Thursday

Prepared material so that YF could fill in her NZ tax form which she has not sent and which is overdue!

10 - 11 Friday - Saturday

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12 Sunday

Voted in today's Legco elections.

13 Monday

Results of elections completed. Pro-democracy camp gain but do not get a majority. The Democratic party actually lose 2 seats. DAB and Liberal party become the largest parties in Legco.

14 Tuesday

Some trouble last night with breathing. Air Pollution Index exceeds 200 in Tung Chung -- which probably means a lot of the pollution has come from China.

15 - 16 Wednesday - Thursday

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17 Friday

Because of thunderstorm warning, had to wait until late afternoon for swim; did 4 km for the week.

18 Saturday

The wound on my right hand seems finally to have healed.

19 Sunday

Jiang Zemin steps down as chairman of the Central Military Commission, i.e., the head of the military. Hu now in control of all 3 key posts -- president, chairman of the Communist Party and chairman of the military commission.

20 Monday

No swim - thunderstorm warming up just when I wanted to go to the pool! Again not feeling that good at night; trying to sleep with 3 pillows!

21 Tuesday

Watched a TV documentary 'Secrets of NZ' about the darker side of the country -- earthquakes, volcanoes, rough Cook Strait.

22 - 23 Wednesday - Thursday

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24 Friday

Swam 70 laps for the week (about 4.2 km). Attended the poolside buffet in the evening -- not bad. Admission was by two cans/packages of food per person as a donation for the Salvation Army. Very cloudy (polluted) but no rain.

25 Saturday

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26 Sunday

First F-1 Grand Prix held in China, at a new circuit in Shanghai; Baricello in a Ferrari wins.

27 Monday

Fine day. No gym but swam 50 laps = 3 km! Felt good but maybe a bit too much as felt tired later.

28 Tuesday

One of the 1985 Braemar Hill murderers, 15 years old at the time, released from prison today. Swam 42 laps today.

29 Wednesday

Holiday -- mid-autumn festival. Got a phone call from Gavin - spoke for an hour.

30 Thursday

'Spaceship 1' flies into space for the second time but the first of two times in its attempt to win the \$10 million prize.

OCTOBER

1 Friday

Another public holiday! National day. Completed 11 km in the pool for the week! Would have been Mum's 93rd birthday today.

2 Saturday

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3 Sunday

Cooler, with max only about 25 degrees.

4 Monday

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5 Tuesday

SpaceshipOne successfully makes its second flight (Monday US time) to claim the prize.
DBS bank scraps deposit boxes in renovation blunder.

6 Wednesday

Long Hair, in his black Tiananmen T-shirt, sworn in as a legislative councillor, but unable to resist shouting out a few slogans.

7 Thursday

King Sihanouk of Cambodia, living in Beijing, abdicates.

8 Friday

“Bowling for Columbine” on TV (11 pm); as very late, only watched half of it. Swam 6 km this week, on top of gym exercise.

9 Saturday

Elections today in Australia and Afghanistan. Howard government re-elected, Picked up lamp for the piano.

10 Sunday

Finally wrote first formal letter since returning from LA.

11 Monday

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12 Tuesday

Alleged rapist of 2 British women tourists arrested. Sent copy of my HK Chem books to Singapore. President Chirac of France here for a day. Unveils the display of the huge Picasso mural. Superjail plan shelved.

13 Wednesday

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14 Thursday

One of 2 Chinese engineers taken hostage in Pakistan, killed during a rescue attempt by the military.

15 Friday

Fine every day for the past week. Swam 5 km this week + gym.

16 Saturday

A Cathay Pacific 747 close to landing in HK flies for several minutes not under control; by either pilots or autopilot.

17 Sunday

KCR TST station opens. French aerobatic team flies in from China. Fasted for the whole day to try to reduce the amount of farting and what seems to be 'heartburn.'

18 Monday

Swam 27 laps -- about 1 mile. More HK tourists killed in a bus crash -- this time in Taiwan.

19 Tuesday

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20 Wednesday

French aerobatic display team performs off the south of HK Island. First democratically elected president of Indonesia installed. Another explosion at a coal mine in China killing many workers.

21 Thursday

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22 Friday

Holiday -- Chung Yuen. A number of large hill fires! Just swimming this week -- swam 8 km (= 1 mile a day).

23 Saturday

Too the hotel bus nearly 1 1/2 hours to get to TST -- big traffic jam on Tuen Mun highway.

24 Sunday

TST KCR extension officially opened.

25 Monday

No exercise this week!

26 - 27 Tuesday - Wednesday

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28 Thursday

Went to the supermarket earlier, at about 8:30 am. Better as fewer people. E-mailed NZ regarding machine-readable passports.

29 Friday

Arafat flown to France after becoming seriously ill.

30 Saturday

Had a look at the Chinese icebreaker the 'Snow dragon' (Xue Long) tied up at the Ocean Terminal on its way to Antarctica.

31 Sunday

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NOVEMBER

1 Monday

Today is the 5th anniversary of the hotel -- ceremony with lions and roast pig midday. Also, new 'white' hotel minibuses from today. Had bad stomach pains and some diarrhoea in evening but it seemed to get rid of the stomach pains.

2 Tuesday

Gavin calls at midnight!

3 Wednesday

US presidential election under way. Horror of horrors, Bush seems to have won!

4 Thursday

Kerry concedes defeat; Bush wins.

5 Friday

Trailwalker began today at 9 am -- won by the Securicir Ghurkha team in a record time of 11 hour 57 minutes!. For me, swam 3.7 km this week. A 20/20 report on bureaucratic Pentagon neglect of injured soldiers returned from Iraq. 'The Amazing Race' in NZ this week. Mosquitoes in Tin Shui Wai found to have genes from the Japanese encephalitis mosquito.

6 Saturday

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7 Sunday

Partial fast -- had meal in the evening.

8 Monday

Swam 2km, though only intended to do about 800 m. Felt very good; breathing very good. Attack by Marines on Fallujah begins.

9 - 10 Tuesday - Wednesday

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11 Thursday

Armistice day. Death of Yasser Arafat announced (finally! as may have been dead for several days). NZ gets a tomb of the unknown soldier.

12 Friday

Exercise for this week: weights + running + 7 km swimming.

13 Saturday

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14 Sunday

Remembrance day today; Mr Tung still refuses to attend! Call from Gavin early afternoon; he has had second thoughts about the hospitality industry.

15 Monday

Last swim for season -- did 2 km after gym. Drop in temperature in the evening. Fairly high levels of arsenic found in canned tuna and sardines.

16 Tuesday

No swim; run followed by 10 minutes rowing. Cooler today, and very cloudy.

17 - 19 Wednesday - Friday

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20 Saturday

Good fast run for the season. At 1hr 50 min, was 4 min faster than the same route last year. Air pollution not too bad.

21 Sunday

Macau F3 Grand Prix today.

22 Monday

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23 Tuesday

A 7.2 earthquake off the west coast of NZ. Felt tired after the run in gym + 2 km rowing.

24 Wednesday

A report, very critical of the ESF, to come out today. At Whangerai in NZ, a pod of dolphins herds several swimmers into a group and then circles the group to protect them from a great white shark!

25 Thursday

Again tired after gym (running); did not do any rowing.

26 Friday

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27 Saturday

A good run; 10 minutes off previous time for this run. Lower temperatures also helped; only 18 degrees. Huge hill fire on Lantau has been burning for more than 24 hours; threatened Discovery Bay and heading for Disney site. All Blacks thrash France 45-6; ABs wear red poppies on jerseys in memory of fallen WWI players.

28 Sunday

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29 Monday

Concern over the 7 new and unused multi-storey HOS blocks in Hunghom that are to be demolished and replaced by luxury housing.

30 Tuesday

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DECEMBER

1 Wednesday

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2 Thursday

Engine cowling falls off a Cathay Pacific B-777 just after takeoff from Bangkok on route to India; third engine incident in as many weeks!

3 - 5 Friday - Sunday

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6 Monday

SCMP: Obstetric insurance premiums doubled and to double again; many may stop delivering babies.

7 Tuesday

HK students (supposedly) top in Maths and Science, but poor in reading and also the unhappiest!!

8 Wednesday

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9 Thursday

Big oil spill in the Pearl River Delta after two ships collide - the biggest spill China has had.

10 Friday

Developers announce that the Hunghom Peninsula buildings will NOT be knocked down as originally planned!

11 Saturday

Good run: Tai Po to Sek Kong. Not too hot. But tripped and fell over while running down towards Sek Kong. NZ beat Fiji 33-19 to win the second round of the Rugby 7s tournament held in South Africa.

12 Sunday

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13 Monday

Received notes from Singapore editor on new O-Level Physics syllabus.

14 Tuesday

Gavin leaves Boston Tuesday (US time) for England. Received notes from Singapore editor on new O-Level Biology syllabus. World's tallest bridge opens in Millau, France.

15 Wednesday

TV documentary on Changi WWII prison

16 Thursday

Part of the airport terminal roof in Auckland collapses.

17 Friday

To Fanling in afternoon.

18 Saturday

Did a shorter slower run today. Nadine arrives in the evening. Didn't get to bed until about 1 am!

19 Sunday

Took Nadine to the gym a.m.

20 Monday

Tung Chee Wah and his ministers given a public dressing down for their poor governance by President Hu while they were all in Macau to celebrate the anniversary of the handover. Instead of a dressing down, they tried to put it over as 'encouragement.'

21 Tuesday

Ma On Shan KCR extension from Tai Wai officially opened today.

22 Wednesday

Nadine still has a cold. She goes out in evening for most of the night!

23 - 24 Thursday - Friday

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25 Saturday

Christmas day. Cooler today. Good fast run.. In afternoon, Nadine decided to go to see the 'Nutcracker.' She called me to say she got 2 of last 4 tickets so I rushed in but we were a little late.

26 Sunday

A 9.0 earthquake in the Indian Ocean off the NE coast of Sumatra send tsunamis around the rim of the Indian Ocean killing tens of thousands.

27 Monday

Holiday. Nadine to see the large Buddha on Lantau and then to Victoria Peak.

28 Tuesday

Much colder today. In this area it was still only 9 degrees in the afternoon. Nadine off to Stanley. Shenzhen subway opens.

29 Wednesday

Nadine to Shenzhen for the day.

30 Thursday

Colder. Nadine actually stayed here the whole day.

31 Friday

Nadine out at midday; will greet the new year in on a boat cruise. Aircraft carries USS Abraham Lincoln, after leaving HK from R && R arrives off Aceh to help in tsunami disaster relief.

Hikes: 2004 - 2005

2004

1	20/11	21°C	Tai Po V → lead mine pass (36) → loop to Grassy Hill / rd (1.16) → forest → Tai Po	1:50
2	27/11	18°C	Tai Tong → road/trail → reservoir (34) → Stage 10 track → road (1.11) → forest t.o. (1.23) → Tai Tong Rd → Tai Tong	2:02
3	4/12	22°C	TT Gate → reservoir (27) → road → main dam (1.05) → Stage 10 t.o. (1.33) → small reservoir (1.52) → TT bus terminus	2:05
4	11/12	20°C	Tai Po V → lead mine pass (35) → Tai Mo Shan (1.37) → Twisk (1.58) → Kap Lung trail → Sek Kong	2:33
5	18/12	21°C	Tai Wo → Tai Po t.o. → lead mine pass (1.19) → forest → Tai Po	(2:13)
6	25/12	19°C	Tai Wo → Cloudy Hill (42) → first reservoir (1.07) → Cloudy Hill (1.45) → Park	2:14

2005

7	1/1	9°C	CU → ridge [4] (51) → Kowloon Peak (1.57) → Shatin river (2.26) → CU station	2:53
8	8/1	18°C	Tai Po V → lead mine pass (36) → top of reservoir (48) → road to bottom Needle Hill (1.14) → Needle Hill (1.43) → lead mine pass (?via Grassy Hill) (2.30) → Tai Po V	2:52
9	15/1	13°C	TT Gate → reservoir (28) → Tai Lam Chung trail → tunnel bus	(1:51)
10	22/1	19°C	Tai Mei Tuk → Pat Sin Leng (39) → Hill #8 (59) → Hok Tau dam (1.54) → Cloudy Hill (2.35) → park	3:06
11	29/1	19°C	TT gate → reservoir (27) → forest → road (52) → Stage 10 road (1.01) → top of reservoir (1.13) → Tai Lam Chung trail → tunnel bus	2:17
12	5/2	20°C	Tai Mei Tuk → Brides pool (47) → village (1.01) → Sam A Chung → Lai Chi Wo (1.47) → fire lookout (2.22) → Brides pool (2.39) → Tai Mei Tuk	3:33
–	12.2		No run; treadmill in gym only	–

13	19/2	12°C	Plover cove dam → grave (58) → ridge (1.35) → stream (2.16) → Brides pool (2.44) → Tai Mei Tuk	3:35
14	26/2	16°C	TT gate → reservoir (26) → forest → road (50) → road + track + road (1.15) → top of reservoir (1.31) → tunnel bus	2:00
15	5/3	14°C	TT gate → reservoir (26) → Tai Lam Chung trail → tunnel bus t.o. (1.26) → Y-junction (1.44) → dam (2.14) → Sek Kong	2:37
16	12/3	16°C	Tai Po V → lead mine pass (35) → Ng Tung Chai t.o. (1.15) → temple (1.38) → Kadoorie farm (1.55) → Fanling	3:37
17	19/3	18°C	CU → ridge [4] (49) → Pyramid peak (1.13) → Ma On Shan (1.41) → [4] t.o. (2.15 → [bad fall] → CU	2:54
18	26/3	18°C	TT Road → end of road → Stage 10 → reservoir → tunnel bus ???????????	(2.47)
19	2/4	20°C	TT Road → road to shrine/track → reservoir (36) → Stage 10 road → Stage 9/park (1.02) → track → road to TLT jn (1.40) → road → top of reservoir (2.05) → tunnel bus	2:35
20	9/4	26°C	Tai Po V → lead mine pass (~35) → Tai Mo Shan (1.35) → Twisk (1.56) → Tai Lam Chung (2.53) → tunnel bus	3:28
21	16/4	21°C	Tai Wo → Tai Po t.o. (28) → led mine pass (1.03) → top of reservoir (1.15) → pineapple track → main dam (1.40) → track → top of reservoir (2.18) → lead mine pass (2.44) → Tai Po V	3:08
22	23/4	27°C	TT gate → reservoir (27) → Yuen Tun trail → first shortcut (59) → road (1.03) → reservoir (1.13) → PKA/TT valley trail → Tai Tong	1:48

Average time (19 runs) 2 hours 41 minutes