

Preparation pays off for Selman

British champion Dougie Selman has revealed how his year-long preparation paid off as he powered to glory in the Sri Chinmoy 100km road race held at Perth.

The Corstorphine AAC veteran, 35, hit the gym to improve his strength and durability, while also working on dealing with the mental challenge of running for more than six-and-a-half hours.

He also increased his training load and went on some “unfuelled” practice runs as he used his experience of finishing fifth in the same event in Northern Ireland on his debut 12 months ago.

The hard work reaped its rewards as Dougie claimed gold by 10 seconds, knocking 13 minutes and 20 seconds off last year’s time and his own CAAC club record in the process.

It also smashed the course record at North Inch Park and helped secure team gold for Scotland in the Anglo Celtic Plate home countries event.



Dougie Selman crosses the finishing line after the 100k road race

Dougie said: “The preparations all went really well. I started beginning to prepare for this year’s race pretty much immediately after last year’s. The first thing I did was to get in the gym a wee bit more to try to make my body a bit more robust, in the hope that this would help me be able to handle a high training load and hold things together a bit more than I did last year in the latter stages.

I have had a lot of help from (performance coach) Rory Downie in that regard.

“I then aimed to get into good marathon shape in December to set me up for the training block. In terms of the training block itself, I largely just tried to take all of the things that worked well last time and just do more of that.

“My overall training volume was higher. I shifted the balance more towards low-end aerobic work and ran on some hillier routes a few times. I also did a few unfuelled runs, which I

didn't do any of last year. I think it pretty much all worked and got me into the best shape I could be on the day. I think it was worth it!"

Dougie timed his charge to perfection to take the title ahead of English pair James Turner and Joseph Turner in 6 hours, 34 minutes and 28 seconds.

He says he had confidence going into the event and put some of his lessons learnt to good use, including reaching for some flat Coke earlier in the race.

He adds: "I was definitely more confident, mainly because I had the experience of last year in the bank so I wasn't going into the unknown this time. That being said, I don't think you ever really know how it's going to go in an event like that.

"The actual running tactics were pretty simple; you just go with the pace that feels realistic, stay patient and then just hang on as best you can. I did have more plans for how to deal with the psychological challenges this year, though, which were really all about how to keep my mental state as stable as possible. Having the Coke earlier this year was one of those things. It's pretty minor but something as small as that can help to get you out of – or, even better, stop you going too far into – a dark hole."

But the race wasn't without its worries for Dougie, as two niggles bothered him shortly after the halfway mark.

He recalls: "I did feel pretty controlled and knew it was going quite well, but it can change so quickly that I was just trying to not overthink it. From about 50km I had a bit of discomfort in my left foot, and from about 60km my right calf was slightly twinging, so I was always a bit conscious of that and trying to manage my body through.

"I didn't really think about the splits much at all and didn't really know what pace we were on until someone said 6:33 pace

at about 75km. That was way faster than I thought I could run going into the race, but I was pretty sure at that point I was running at the right effort level so didn't panic too much."

Despite appearing in total command of the race on the final lap, Dougie insists he didn't feel assured of victory until he neared the finish. And his kick for the line was almost matched by long-time friend and fellow CAAC member Tom Ferrington, who followed him up the home straight while filming the action.

Home favourite Dougie, who grabbed a Saltire before crossing the line, said "The point where I thought I was going to win was probably only about 800m from the finish – and even then I was running pretty scared all the way to the line!

"The support on the day was so good, it was absolutely amazing. A lot of friends and family were there and being a Scot on home soil meant I was getting a disproportionately large amount of support. I think Tommy was there pretty much twice a lap, so he put in as much of an endurance shift as I did!

"Going through for the last lap and then coming up the home straight felt so exciting. I'm so glad I was able to deliver a win. It's a moment I will never forget."