

Taranaki Race Walking Club

Odd Ball Relay

16 July 2017

Racing the oddities

Our late founder, Norm Read, hated this course with a passion because every time we used it, it was either blowing a gale or teeming down with rain.

However today, the weather Gods smiled on us because it was absolutely brilliant weather despite the official weather forecast. Blue skies, sun beaming down on us, no wind but a cold snap in the air, to cool down the 'top guns'.

The teams had already been picked by names drawn from a hat, I believe. Only two were three person teams, with the rest in teams of two. Serena was collecting all the team times and names for the time keepers and actually helped one team with their time as they had got it so wrong they would have gone off last, if not corrected. Maybe they were very confident in their ability but accepted Serena's counselling nevertheless.

Eric did his pre-race instructions and raced himself, with whom I have no idea as he wasn't on the team sheet I was given. First up was Brian & Anne, with old slowcoach being the rabbit for Anne. Brian had spent all night working out times for the team and made a pig's ear out of both of them. His second mistake was calling the team West Ham as we all know where they normally come, prophetic name as it turned out.

Anne was getting a lot of pre-race hassling from Peter trying to get into her head but was giving as good as she got. Away we went from the gun, as our timekeepers Trevor and Dave W clicked their watches. Being a pleasant day Anne & Brian discussed the state of the economy and other important state matters whilst they walked. Well, Anne did most of the talking whilst Brian just kept trying to breathe.

I believe Sue & Gaylene were second off the blocks but as we came up to the finish of our first lap we saw Carol & Peter champing at the bit on the line. Banter was exchanged as we passed them, something like 'Eat my dust' and we did about 100m later as they surged passed. I think that was the last I saw of anyone in the race until I had to say farewell to my team mate at the finish of my

third lap. I did consider the Ivor Changeover but thought as we've actually been walking side by side for three laps "perhaps not", also it was a Sunday, where one should show a bit of decorum.

Due to the varying stagger starts I never saw Dave B, Serena, Marlene, Michelle, Mary, & Arthur walk but was on hand after I finished, when Sue crossed the line to release Gaylene who was all business today, wearing her 'Go Fast' shorts. Anne was nearing the first turn as Gaylene set off in pursuit.

Contrary to Eric's instructions about people who want to walk further, to do it, the other side of the road to the race and walk the other way around, I walked on the course picking up cans for Dave and got growled at. Still it was worth it as I picked up 21 cans on the course just on my side of the road.

Passing me on my travels, were Eric with Peter not far behind, Sherryn on her own and Alan quite away back, Jeff was on his own as was Ross. At the bell, Peter had closed the gap a bit as had Alan and now Gaylene was less than 100m behind Anne.

There must have been a conflagration during the last lap because Eric, Peter and Alan crossed line a breast, with Sherryn only 20m behind, then came Jeff and Ross and lucky last was Anne who was handicapped out of it by Brian's stupidity and had been overtaken by Gaylene towards the end. "I'm not walking with him again wailed Anne." She must have forgiven me though as she gave me a lift to Gaylene's and dropped me off home as well.

As we were waiting for the walkers to finish, so Mike, Harry, Alison & Julie pulled up on their bikes to have a chat.

Then it was all back to Gaylene's who had stepped into the breach to host us as Jeff had to shoot away for family commitments. Lovely situation she lives in and a lovelier carrot cake she made. I just managed to get the last piece.

The results were announced with Michelle, Ross and Mary only 3secs from their posted time which is quite impressive over nearly 11km. I can't remember who was second and third, sorry about that but their times were also impressive at just 10 & 39secs. Fourth was Alan & Marlene at 55secs, with Alan complaining that Marlene had walked too fast; guess who calculated her time? Last, you guessed it, West Ham, true to form as usual.

Michelle had a big surprise for us all in the shape of gift bags, which she dished out to various team members & helpers with a little speech before each presentation. West Ham even got one, for being last; see, you don't have to win all the time to get a prize.

I'm starting to think that this is the most popular event on our club calendar because there was so much good-natured banter between teams before, during and after the race, as well as at Gaylene's. Personally, I think that is what the club is all about. Go hard as you can during a race and relax and have fun with everyone afterwards.

Many thanks to Trevor and Dave W for the time keeping, Arthur for the water stop and Eric for setting up the course and dismantling afterwards. Where would we be without these helpers?

VIEW FROM THE BACK, MIDDLE & END

Today's Points

Ross/Michelle/Mary 8 pts
Jeff/Serena/Arthur 6 pts
Sherryn/Dave B 4 pts

Points Trophy Standing

Michelle 47 pts
Serena 35 pts
Sue 33 pts
Ross 32 pts
Arthur 29 pts
Anne 28 pts
Eric 27 pts
Brian 25 pts
Sherryn 25 pts

Style Trophy Standings

Serena 74.00
Sherryn 71.50
Michelle 71.00
Alan 69.50
Tony 65.00
Ross 65.00
Hannah 56.50
Rachel 56.00
Anne 56.00
Sue 51.00
Marlene 40.50
Peter F 40.50
Eric 36.00
Dave B 30.00
Gaylene 38.00
Daniel 16.00

Today's Results

Member	Team Name	Start Time	Race Time	Finish Time	Difference	Points
Ross/Michelle/Mary	Most Reliable Movers (MRM)	09:41:35	01:25:08	11:00:03	00:03	8
Jeff/Serena/Arthur	Middle Aged Spread	09:44:58	01:24:55	10:59:50	00:10	6
Sherryn/ Dave B		09:43:30	01:24:26	10:59:21	00:39	4
Alan/Marlene	Partly Hungover	09:42:00	01:24:10	10:59:05	00:55	2
Peter/Carol	PC	09:49:11	01:24:10	10:59:05	00:55	2
Eric/Maryanne	Just ME	09:46:00	01:24:10	10:59:05	00:55	2
Gaylene/Sue	The Legends	09:37:00	01:28:00	11:02:55	02:55	2
Anne/Brian	Westham	09:34:55	01:28:16	11:03:11	03:11	2

