

Taranaki Race Walking Club Bell Block Burn Up 28 April 2019

For those of you who expected a comprehensive report on today's race, I can tell you, you are fresh out of luck. The course followed the same path as last year but had been adjusted on the three turnaround points.

Dave W and Eric got out there early to put out the traffic management gear and had time to reverse their vans with open backs which had canvas over to provide shelter for our timekeeper and waiting/finishing walkers. Dave was also our timekeeper, as well today and Arthur set up camp opposite with the water station. After the downpour Francis emerged from her hiding place in the dry and stood for the rest of the race helping Arthur.

Serena had devised a devilish plan for this race to utterly confuse this scribe and others as well, I think. Each walker went off in the opposite direction to the previous walker when it was their turn to start. Seems simple enough? But then after completing each lap you had to turn at the Start/Finish cone and go back the way you came. Another duty for the timekeeper to remember.

The 10km walkers had only done a couple of laps when the skies opened and it pelted down and they were soaked to the skin by the time they had done 50m and were all soon sporting 'The Old Man's Drip'.

MaryAnne had to leave early as she had an appointment to attend, so started on scratch with Dave. Eric had said at the start, that one of the ideas behind the way we were to race today was to keep you thinking and not go to sleep during the race.

MaryAnne must have been asleep during his briefing, because although she went the same way as Dave at the start, she certainly wasn't at the end of her 5km. Not only that, she walked off the course to confer with Dave W about where she had to finish. That must have added a few minutes on her finishing time.



As the rain pelted down, Marlene was next to go. “No way am I walking in this” she said. “You can scratch my name off Dave”. Fortunately, it slowed to a drizzle and she took off wearing her raincoat. Five minutes later it hosed down again. I was next followed by Sue a few minutes later, with both of us also wearing raincoats. Both Marlene & Sue discarded theirs later on when the rain stopped but I kept mine on so as not to get cold.

I passed Laura at one stage and she had a pained look on her face, whether this was due to she was hurting or it was just the weather I don't know. I did notice she had a plaster on one of her upper arms, the area they give you horrible things like smallpox jabs, so that might have been the reason.

Eric, Peter & Ross were all concentration every time I saw them. Michelle had lost her smile somewhere on the course and replaced it with gritty determination.

I really need to get my hearing checked, as whilst passing me at one stage, I thought Serena was asking me what lap I was on but actually was warning me that a car was coming up behind me. How can you get that so wrong? No one had any idea how they were walking because it all changed at the Start/Finish cone. One minute you were closing in on someone and the next, they were off in the opposite direction as were you. It was only on my last lap that I was suddenly chasing Marlene, “Catch me if you can” she said as we passed on opposite sides of the road, with her about 150m lead.

I dug it in in an attempt to close the gap but then Anne cruised past me and shortly after, went passed Marlene. Helen wasn't too far behind me and Gaylene was chasing her. I stepped up the pace with 100m to go to try catch Marlene, which I didn't and then saw Sue coming towards the Finishing cone.

We must have seen each other at the same time because up came our arms and the turnover increased remarkably as we raced to the finish and we passed each other at the finishing cone, so the handicapper got that one right.



Points Trophy 2019

Anne Fraser	17
Dave Barrett	16
Sue Park	15
Gaylene Phillips	11
Serena Coombes	11
Marlene White	10
Ross Allen	10
Brian O'Shea	9
Eric Kemsley	9
Helen Baverstock	9