

Gold Coast Marathon

Friday 2 July 6.10 am: Excitement mounting as three male and two female race walkers fly out of Hamilton airport - leaving behind rain and the darkness of Hamilton. Not to mention the two husbands who had to pull out at the eleventh hour - our support crew mind you - so we were on our own. Four of us experiencing our very first overseas event, but with one seasoned expert!

The flight was a breeze. We landed in beautiful sunshine - but oops (our first); one item of luggage had not arrived. It was still back in Hamilton apparently. We stayed 'cool' as a smooth train and then a lovely limo ride delivered us to our apartments. Needing some food desperately, we indulged on fish and chips at a highly recommended establishment just below our apartment. We all had to agree that, yes, the Aussies can do good fish and chips.

A visit to the event site was next on the agenda to familiarize ourselves with the centre and to pick up race packs. Oops number two: All went smoothly for four of us but one pack was not to be found. Once resolved it was back home to sport on the tele.

Day two: – A beach walk was a must, but four of our crew thought that it had to be at day break. Then one of the team thought that the marathon was a day earlier than it was! After navigating home by building cranes that kept moving and changing direction, a short rest was in order - then off to Pacific Fair.

Certain members of the group thought that walking was now out of the question. So a trip on the monorail (in the opposite direction and dropping us off further from the Plaza than where we started from) was negotiated. Some lunch and a wee window shop was all that we fitted in before it was off to the newly opened exhibition centre. It was packed with people so we did not stay too long, then it was homeward bound. A very impressive building however.

The venue for our pre-event dinner was discussed at length. We settled for '*Jo's - The Biggest Roast Meals in Town*'. No one warned us that expandable clothes were a necessity. On our way back home the grandparents in our group spotted some very funky T-shirts for the 'wee ones' so some Aussie dollars were well spent. One of the males in our group also ended the day sporting a very nice new jacket. An early night was necessary as the alarm clocks were set for 4.30am!

Event day: – Packed into a bus with the smell of linament and a sense of excitement. We were soon lined up ready to start. HMC shirts were well represented and indeed did extremely well in all events entered. (Go the Kiwis.)

Day after the events: - A day of R&R for our group. A planned a bus tour up Mt Tamberine, but one of our group decided that the girls volley ball on the beach was a better choice!

Third oops - the bus broke down, - luckily at the top of the mountain. We were soon on our way in another bus and the first stop was morning tea. Kilos had to be replaced from yesterday so scones, lashing of jam and cream and also cottage-made fudge. One can only guess whether it was the scones, fudge, or was it the wine from the vineyard on the way home, that made certain members of our tour just a little funny-in-the-tummy.

Day 5. Our last day: - Fortunately we had kept one room for the day to store our bags and have a shower etc. Us females had not yet had a real shop, so this morning was the morning to address this. The males went for a stroll to visit fellow club members/travellers. The shop that proved most successful was a gorgeous swimwear place though the proof is yet to be revealed! A rest by the pool came next, along with a swim in the surf for two of our party. A quick shower and it was farewell to Broadbeach.

A brief power blackout at the airport was almost our 4th oops and thoughts of not getting home that night flashed into my mind. But it proved to be an uneventful flight home, and we munched our way through all our leftover fruit before landing. Water was free but you had to pay for juice so one resourceful male in the group decided to make his own juice on the plane - but that's another story.

Well five days went by all too quickly. Now it's back to the grind and the training in our wonderful Waikato weather.

Our group consisted of: Kevin, Wilf, Bruce, Heather and Raewyn. Also entered events were Jack, Maureen, Helen, Colleen, Martin, Noel, Mary, and Maureen.

A wonderful trip was had by all. I thank fellow travellers sincerely for their company, humour, help and encouragement. [I have been told that, 'what goes on tour stays on tour'. 'So I am open to bribery!]

Raewyn Richmond
July 8, 2004

