

Kerikeri Half Marathon

On Saturday 13 November 2004, seven members of our club participated in the Kerikeri Half Marathon. Most of us travelled up on the Friday with, I might add, some trepidation. The weather forecast was not very promising, with heavy showers and thunder expected. However, Murphy's Law (in reverse) was at work, and contrary to the Met Service prediction we had a lovely sunny day for our journey up.

Should any of you decide to do this event in future, we recommend you do as we did and break the trip into three segments. A stop off at Orewa for morning coffee, then at Whangarei for lunch and a browse around the waterfront and gift shops, etc, and then on to Kerikeri. Repeat this on the way home, with maybe a couple of side trips thrown in. If you've not been up there before, do a little detour via Haruru Falls and Paihia, which adds very little extra time unless you want to. For those that are connoisseurs of fancy loos, then maybe a stop off at Kawakawa to visit those tourist ones! By the way, fellas, keep a tight rein on the women folk; you never know who they chat up in those places! I had trouble separating my lot from some foreign tanned-skinned gent they spied lurking around the loo! Won't repeat some of the comments made as we journeyed on. Another good stop is the glow-worm caves at Kawiti just south of Kawakawa, and only a 1 km diversion.

A lot of you may have been to Whangarei Falls before, but have you completed the circular walk? Cross at the top of the falls, down the far side to the bottom of the falls, and then up the opposite side and back to the carpark. Well worth the effort - and works up an appetite for lunch!

We would like to say a big thank you to Rita and Dave for their invitation to share their excellent accommodation in the Top Ten Holiday Park. Great location, and just five minutes from the event venue. It might be best not to give away too much of the nocturnal habits of the folk in said accommodation. There were accusations of folk talking in their sleep, etc, but I figure they were hearing voices in their heads. Mind you, I did hear a bit of surreptitious movement during the night and some stifled exclamations.

Race day dawned a bit overcast with drizzle falling as we were bussed out to the start. Just about ideal conditions, though, for our walk and quite warm once you got going. Drink stations came up just when needed at ideal intervals, and lots of encouragement along the way. Had to crack the whip over some club members who started to think they were out there just to enjoy the scenery. One I had to rein in a bit as I was getting a bit worried she'd beat me in, and the thought of getting beaten in by two shemales didn't bear thinking about! Seriously though folk, I'd like to congratulate Sharon Wrenn on an absolutely outstanding effort! To do a PB on a course like that was off the top shelf, and you will see from the times listed later just why I had to put the hammer down! In fact, it was a top effort from all our walkers.

A really well-organized event, and those juicy orange segments at the finish were just the bees' knees. Very, very refreshing! Great major spot prizes with fishing rods, sets of golf clubs, shoe vouchers, etc, and two great overseas trips to be had. Minor spot prizes were picked up on the Friday when you received your race pack, and this really speeded things up on race day. Just as well this year, as things hadn't quite finished as the rain showers started, and boy did it rain that night! All in all, an extremely well-organised event, and a great weekend with excellent company.

After heavy rain during the night, Sunday morning was ushered in with a cacophony of bird song and bright sunshine. Not what the Met Service had been forecasting, but then we weren't about to complain as it made for a very pleasant journey home. This is a really great event and weekend that we recommend you think about doing. Take the Friday off and make it a long weekend holiday with a bit of walking thrown in.

Good health in exercise - The Irish Scribe

Results (approximately 1000 walkers and 1000 runners)

Raewyn Richmond	2:26:00	19th overall
Wilf Johnston	2:27:33	23rd
Sharon Wrenn	2:29:12	27th (PB)
Brian Bayliss	2:42:01	99th

Heather Ord
Raewyn Putt
Rita Powell

2:45:19 153rd
2:59:22 421st
3:00:07 439th



