



RUNNING COMMENTARY



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Articles

Do you have something interesting which could be included in our magazine?
If you feel that it is interesting we would love to share it with other members.
Articles for the next issue should be sent in by the middle of November.
A big thank you to those members who have contributed to this issue.

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From the Editor:

This month's edition has another blast from the past, looking back at when we got our first track at Rawhiti Domain. It was a cinder track and I have fond memories of my introduction to athletics on this track. Back then we had a forest on the right hand side, which gave a natural break to the easterly winds. It was a great setting for a running track.



Margaret's coverage of our Masters Women's team at this years Takahe to Akaroa relay is very entertaining. The age range of this group of experienced runners is amazing.

Tony Prisk

Run New Brighton:

Since the start of our pack runs back on July 10th, Run New Brighton has held ten group runs and has had dozens of different people from Eastern Christchurch and beyond join in. We have always ran somewhere different from the Avon River Trail, Travis Wetlands, Bottle Lake Forest, the Coastal Trail, the Red Zone and other areas. We have also done group speed work sessions on our own Athletics Track. Many people have said they have enjoyed it and that this is a good thing for the club and the community.

The groups success could not have happened without the contributions from volunteers. A special thanks to Richard Young and Stephen Graham for being pack leaders. The group could not function without your help. We would be especially thankful for any other members of the club willing to be a pack leader.

The group will continue running every Wednesday from the clubrooms until November so I encourage all members of the club to come along sometime to train with us. This is an awesome opportunity to meet other runners in the club and runners from the local community.

Long-term, I hope to continue this group next year and I hope to see it continue to grow and bring runners from the club and the community together and bring out the best in everyone. If anybody is interested in helping by being a pack leader or just helping to promote our group, any help would be greatly appreciated.

Hayden



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To see some of my work, check out the PDF versions of
Cant-A-Long, the Canterbury Master's magazine,
on the Canterbury Masters website.

Children's Section:

With winter season wrapping up for our young athletes we are gearing up for the busy summer season. We had a lovely final training session with games and food, which seemed to disappear within minutes. It must be all the long-distance running!



This season the Summer Children's Track & Field Committee is implementing some exciting new tools and changes. The first of these will be the introduction of Heja an App which will enable us to more effectively schedule training sessions as well as Canterbury Children's Athletics Association (CCAA) and club events, manage attendance and post information.

We have also re-introduced Tuesday Club Nights as Social Nights which will run every second Tuesday. We are hoping this will make it easier for parents to attend and support their children by reducing the burden of weekly sessions, but enable children to still have the opportunity to try out Athletics, learn technique, improve strength and speed in key events. This change has been in response to the ongoing decline of parent support that many other clubs and sports have been seeing in recent years.

The introduction of fortnightly Social Nights has meant that we have been able to modify our coaching programme so that our coaching team is better able to support each other and the athletes. This year we have the return of Paul Wadsworth and Kevin Exton as our Throws coaches along with new coach Henry Lemalu. Pat Boland is returning to take the reins of High Jump, while new coaches Dean Taurima, Josie and Paul Gray are excited to take on coaching Long Jump. Bronwyn Alexander, Tony McManus and Meredith Seeto are returning as our Track coaches and have had some outstanding results in previous years. We were unable to find a parent to take on the Littles Club but Holly Gray along with Zoe Marino have stepped up to pass on their enthusiasm for their sport to our adorable under six-year-olds. This is a wonderful example of how much our older athletes love their club giving up their own training time to support the younger ones. All our coaches are passionate about seeing our young athletes achieve their best in all their events.

Pre-season training is underway so a big thank you to our coaches for helping our summer athletes begin to prepare for the season ahead. We will be holding two Have A Go/Information nights on Tuesday 1st and 8th October starting at 5.30pm. Thursday training sessions will begin on 3rd October; these are for athletes intending to compete at the CCAA Inter-club Saturday competition beginning Saturday 19th October. As always it is going to be a busy but exciting track and field season this summer. Keeping reading the Running Commentary to see the achievements of our young athletes as they strive to achieve their personal bests.

Blast from the past - Our first track:

START BEING MADE ON BRIGHTON CINDER TRACK



A bulldozer makes a start clearing ground on the site of the New Brighton Amateur Athletic Club's new cinder track in the Rawhiti Domain. The area is covered with lupin, sand hills and tree stumps. The track has been resited at the rear of the New Brighton Tennis Club's courts after discussions with the Christchurch City Council, which is clearing the area.

NEW SITE CHOSEN FOR CINDER TRACK

A NEW site has been chosen for the New Brighton Amateur Athletic Club's cinder track in Rawhiti Domain.

Representatives of the club, the Christchurch City Council and the Rawhiti Golf Club yesterday agreed that there was a danger of athletes being struck by golf balls if the track were built on the original site.

The new site is still in the Rawhiti Domain, but is near Keyes Road.

Regretted

The new track would probably not be available for the proposed athletic carnival on December 7, but it was proposed to make a grass track of 220 yards available in Thomson Park.

"While the delay is to be regretted, the new site is far superior to the old one, and I am confident that all concerned will endorse the change," said Cr. Skellerup.

Dismayed when told to halt plans for an immediate start on the cinder track near the golf course

facilities, "Though this will mean a delay in the completion of the track, preliminary work is expected to start tomorrow," said the chairman of the Reserves Committee (Cr P J Skellerup) today.

Venue Change

The club president (Mr Harold Savage) said he would seek permission to stage the December carnival at Lancaster Park or at an alternative ground on December 7.

The club considers that, in the long run, the alternative site for the cinder track will work out as a better proposition.

The area offered is unoccupied, and will be for the club's sole use though it is undeveloped at this stage.

But the council has offered to clear the area and assist in providing spectator facilities.

THE 2019 TAKAHE TO AKAROA RELAY - as run by the Masters Women's team

Iconic is one of the many words used to describe this Relay that is the feature event of the last part of the Winter season. Memorable is another. You cannot get a group of experienced (my new code word for mature) runners together without people competing to tell their story about what happened when they ran a particular lap back when. People take pride in how many of the different laps they have run and which one is their favorite. Our own Tony Good has the record for running all the laps in the fastest time I believe.

Last year's race was a standout for me as we took the NRR silver medal. Our team had an age range of over 25 years and of course it was anchored by Andrea's record-breaking second lap. This year had a much smaller field and was also memorable for me in a different way. I was much more relaxed and had the time to notice more. Lots of practice at Relay running doesn't always do away with nerves and last year I was running scared, waiting to be passed at any minute.

So this year, I was determined to enjoy every minute, possibly even while I was running my lap. The weather came to the party. Despite early low fog around the hills and in the harbour, by the time we got to the end of Lap 1, it was a glorious spring day. If you haven't already looked at the photos on facebook, check them out.

Lap 1.

You will see Shannon's smile as she starts the downhill from the Kiwi with a clear sky in the background. The next photo shows the cloud sitting low over the harbour. Shannon ran strongly throughout her lap.

I can never drive across the bottom of that downhill from the Kiwi without remembering the first time I ran the lap as a relative newbie. I heard the advice but didn't follow it. The length of that downhill can seduce you into thinking what a strong runner you are and when you have to transfer the leg muscles into uphill mode all of a sudden you can feel metaphorical wheels falling off. Had the team car not been parked at that precise spot, I do believe I would have sat down and wept. How I carried on, I do not know but it was the first experience I had of the power of a relay to draw reserves you didn't realize you had into play.

Shannon didn't stop at one lap, however. She carried on to the end of Lap 2 where she waited for Allan to finish his Lap and head off to her sister's wedding.

Lap 2 requires discipline. Go out too hard up that first hill out of Allandale and later on when the climb up Gebbies begins to bite you may wish you could call a cab, or these days, whistle up an Uber. The photo of Caroline shows her determined style as she kept our team momentum going and ran a time that won her age group.

The special thing about this changeover is the cake stall that has been run for years in the church hall just up the hill from the Lap Change. Many runners take the opportunity to stock upon home baking or a coffee. I can highly recommend the Ginger crunch.

Lap 3.

Ruth took us through Lap 3. She hadn't run the relay for a number of years and our conversation in the team car is part of what made me realize how the experience of the moment is overlaid with memories of time past. Not all good. Running Lap 3 about 6 years ago was the final straw for my left 4th metatarsal and the resulting stress fracture kept me out of the NRR in Motueka later that year. Mind you, it allowed me to follow Mark Bailey on his Lap on my bike. Scary downhill speed! And that was him.

Ruth always looks like she is enjoying her running while giving it her best. I can't swear she was smiling the whole way because I was starting to focus on my own lap coming up, but it wouldn't surprise me. Ruth being in the team again was such a great thing. We had missed her and had been appreciating her great individual running throughout this last season. Our longtime 'ladies' coach from a few years ago, Trevor Preece, who was special to Ruth, used to say of relay running, "You just have to get from A to B." Without each member the team could not run, so every member is important. Ruth passed me the baton after a solid run that Trevor would have judged much more than sufficient.

Lap 4.

Knowing as a Selector that you put your slowest runner on Lap 4, I set off thanking progress for the GPS watch on my wrist. I had a pace in mind that I thought I could sustain after the 3 previous weeks of racing in Mackay and Auckland.

I have run Lap 4 more times than any other lap and back in the day my strategy was to drive out the week before and spray k marks on the road to help me judge my pace. Let no one tell you Lap 4 is flat!! There are two places where there is a distinct rise that causes you to breathe a little more deeply and slow ever so slightly.

Last year I ran this lap and collapsed in a heap at the end. It was probably Stephen Graham who took the photo and sent it far and wide. (See comment re Lap 1.) Fortunately this year, the stonking easterly that had me running practically doubled over for the last 1.4k last year was absent and I managed to run faster than last year. And not collapse.

Lap 5.

Andrea took the baton and set off in her inimitable way. She has a beautiful upright and rapid cadence that chews through the distance. This point in the Course is where the dreaded midges make their appearance. This year was no exception and they were exceptionally large. The shot I took shows her with a bandana around her neck. Another shot shows her with it over her mouth.

This reminded me of our lovely Robyn Duncan who famously constructed a net fixture somewhat like a bridal veil to combat the midges on that lap years ago.

This was also the lap where the 'Race within a race' came into play. Some of our members train regularly with runners both unaffiliated and members of clubs. We enjoy the age and gender range and encourage one another.

On that day, our MW team was racing a group of our running friends and it was serious! Andrea took us past them. We were happy to get bragging rights. This is another part of Relay racing. It's not just about the top Senior teams. We are all measuring ourselves against our peers and that is a huge age range and a measure of our individual standing, if that matters.

Lap 6.

Andrea ran a brilliant Lap setting a record and passed over to Tina who tackled the infamous Lap 6. See photo. This is a hard lap to support people on because the road is narrow and there are not many places to stop. I swear she could have dusted my car as she ran past at one point. It is a specialist Lap which some people choose to run. John Hellemans from the NB Club has both the Senior and masters record, I believe. Tina ran determinedly up the hill finishing in a great time. She was 1st MW.

Lap 7.

Tina handed over to Ronalda and this is where the relay gets mysterious. It carries on away from the main road to Akaroa along the Summit Road and then drops back down to reconnect with the main road about a k from Duvauchelles.

Unless you have driven or biked that way you have no idea about the Course. The first part is undulating but then it changes into a downhill that is very demanding on the feet of those souls who agree to run it. This is the only lap on which the runners have no support at all. They emerge back onto the main road and we can see them down at sea level, but we cheer only as they fly down to the finish. Ronalda has specialized in this lap for a while. She ran faster than last year and is still recovering from the blisters. Lennie from our rival team, at time of writing, still can't run. I've crossed it off my laps still to run list.

Lap 8.

Mel took over and repeated her great run from last year when she anchored us to that aforementioned silver medal despite being in the early stages of recovering from a bug. This year she was in much better health and fresh from winning her age group at the National Road Champs the week before. She took over 4 minutes off her time from the previous year taking us home in first place.

This is a terrific lap for those of you who like the Governors Bay to Lyttelton race. It is one of my favourites. Cookie introduced me to the way the to think about it. You have 3 hills to conquer- Bugger One, Bugger two and Bugger three. The last one leads to the lovely downhill into the domain and the finish line. My photo of Mel shows her smiling too.

It was a good day for the Club with all 4 teams on the podium and I am sure each team has stories about their run. No, Paul, I am not mentioning the numbers at Lap 5.

My thoughts as I drove back over the hills to Christchurch were that this event is an experience that I will treasure and that I am fortunate to still be able to participate.

Alongside that, knowing what these events require, I am grateful to all the organisers and to the volunteers from all the clubs that helped it happen. Relays are a dying breed. The drop in numbers in our sport is putting the continuation of many of them at risk. Here in Canterbury, I continue to be amazed at the lack of support for the Greta Valley relay which has to be one of the most scenic and traffic friendly relays left to us.

You don't have to be an elite runner to be in a relay team. Yes, we all want to run well according to our level and we like our club teams to do well. Yes I liked being in a winning team. But I haven't always been and I won't always be in future. There is joy in running as a group and sharing the experience of pushing yourself for the group good at whatever level that is. I have described my recent Relay experiences. In my life as a runner they haven't always been medal winners. What they have always been is a shared experience of trying your best and supporting your team, of laughter and memories and the sheer delight of running. Well, afterwards. But always glad that we could.

Margaret





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