



TRENTHAM UNITED

HARRIERS & WALKERS

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AURORA MARATHON REPORT 2008 - JAN BLIEKENDAAL

Hi everyone,

Quite prophetic that one of the dictionary definitions of Aurora is Roman Goddess of Dawn. She certainly looked favourably upon Andrew and Sonja. As for me I suspect the beautiful pink sky as dawn broke really did mean the shepherd's warning.

Goodness we certainly had many seasons in one day on Sunday. A very crisp early morn with fog along Alexander Rd, a very warm mid morning and then the showers struck. Apparently the Goddess looked favourably upon Andrew and Sonja and put her umbrella up (a bit like Jake did for Paul along the course) and only I incurred the rain God's displeasure.

Being a handicap race we all started at various times and did various course options. Andrew and I did the 50K, Sonja the marathon, and Anne Dry and John Ihaka did the team version of the marathon doing a 21.1 leg each.

Andrew had a stellar day and turned in a PB of 5:56:07. Just over a minute faster than the long distance champs 50K at Labour Weekend. The course for that is flat over a 2K loop inside Whakatu cool stores so given the improved time on a tougher course he did really well. I knew I was in the when he caught me at 35K despite a 20min handicap on me. His offer of 2 Voltaren tablets needless to say did not go down well. He said he was hurting but I guess that is all relative. He picked his way thru the field and made it to the finish just before the rain. Well done Andrew. We now have another La Belle Italia box of goodies to devour. Ian Priest has the most superb merit prizes I have ever seen.



Sonja and I chatted on the Sat as to whether we would see one another on the course. It seemed doubtful and that is how it ended it. The lucky 3rd marathon over as many months and she was rewarded with a PB of 5:34:28. Must be all that new Asics clothing she bought at Rotorua and wore on the day!! Well done Sonja.



The fog along Alexander Rd was eerie and lo and behold out pops Anne Dry from the mist who was teaming up with John to do the relay . At this stage of the morning we were very much on our own.



For me the 50K started well even despite an emergency dash to Shell on Fergusson. I was trucking along okay until the pressure blisters appeared on both balls and heels of both feet. Stopped at 20K to do some damage control but it was too late. Was catching up on the likes of John Hines and Lynton McLay but then the Goddess of Dawn turned her back on me and the rest was history. I limped in at 7:01:21 which is some 40mins more than predicted. Not a memorable (perhaps it was on a different level) performance but I was determined to finish. I had the honour of being the last to finish!! And yes they do collect the cones up as you go thru!!



I can not speak for Sonja and Andrew but I had a good time chatting to various people as they came past. You may not know their name but you recognise the body and singlet. Francis Wilson made my day at about 35K when he came up behind me and said 'nice legs, I have always been a leg man'. A few moments later this flattering comment was ruined with 'I have a present for you. 2 Voltaren!!'

There were various Trentham members dotted around and on the course. Thanks for the support and club camaraderie and offer of the use of Christine's umbrella, Jake.

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P.O.Box 40-357, Upper Hutt, 04 5285402