



TRENTHAM UNITED

HARRIERS & WALKERS

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EKIDEN RELAY REPORT 2008 - JAN BLIEKENDAAL

Hi Everyone,

Whilst the conditions for the race were not as good as last year, this year's weather certainly did not deter some superb performances in our team and teams in general. Slightly on the coolish side, with the odd bit of drizzle and the odd gust of wind, ideal conditions some would say.

Tim and Sonja did a great job in getting the Club tent up and ready for the team to use.

Our B Grade team certainly acquitted itself well given we were 5th out of 26 combined B and C Grade teams. Our time was 4hours 31mins and 44 secs. Only 7 mins 52 secs slower than the winning B Grade Taranaki Race Walking team.

Michael Walton started the team off with a superb effort on his leg of 7.195 km. This was his 1st judged event although he has competed in various events over the past couple of months. Michael has an impressive pedigree in his running career having competed at an elite level nationally for many years. So whilst race savvy it was tough call for a novice walker given the hardened race walking teams entered. His time of 46:02 put the team in 4th equal place with Taranaki B2. A great start.



Veteran walker Viv then did a superb effort for her 5km to keep us in contention with a time of 36:32. I did the next leg of 7.5km. Caught Scottish within the first 700m and went on to finish in 46:24 placing us in 5th place.



Tim Dutton undertook the longest leg of 10k. Tim is a seasoned walker with many achievements to his name over years of walking. Tim's time of 1:02:50 certainly proved he was the right man for the job and kept us in 5th place.



Andrew completed Lap 5 or race number 14E. Probably the only time in his life he has ever got an E. Obviously all these ludicrously long events and training with yours truly has paid off as he turned in a great time of 45:45 which is some 3mins faster than last year. We were still in 5th place.



Sonja last year had the pressure of going first and this year she had the joy of bringing home the team doing the last 5k. Which she did in 34:12. Photos taken on the course certainly proved she was giving it everything she had.



Not quite a podium finish but we did the Club and ourselves proud!

The event was superbly run and this made life so much easier. The camaraderie within the elite race walking fraternity and walking in

general is great. Top walkers have no qualms in providing support and comments out on the course when you are racing. This gives you a good feeling and ultimately makes you try harder. After a few events and relays you get to recognise many walkers and there is always a friendly hello regardless of level. Great inter club support on the course too.

At the prize giving we were advised that the CIT course will not be available next year due to Government decisions regarding certain educational facilities. However the organisers are hopeful that an alternative course will be established. Or alternatively if the wheels of progress turn slow enough the CIT course may still be available.

Again thanks to the team for dismantling the tent and I assure you the going home for a shower was not a ruse to get out of doing it. Thanks also to the various team members for doing timing/recording etc and a great thanks to Tim for his whiz bang GPS that calculated all the splits for us.

Andrew won a spot prize of 6 peanut slabs so yours is still here for you Viv!!

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