

# Vetline

Official magazine of New Zealand and Oceania Masters Athletics

ISSUE: VOL 38 No. 3

**OCTOBER 2020**

in this issue:

- > ANZ Road Relay Championships
- > National COVID X-Country Challenge
- > IAU 6hr Virtual Global Solidarity Run





Jason Baillie (Don Greg Racing Stables), Dave Kettles (Wgtn Scottish), Ian Graham (Wgtn Scottish), Adrian Lysaght (Lake City) at the NZ Road Relay championships

**PHOTO:** Sharon Wray

Official Magazine of New Zealand and Oceania Masters Athletics  
FOUNDED IN 1970



### Cover Photo

David Anstiss AKL M70 in the Long Bay Cross Country - 27 June 2020  
Photo - Alisha Lovrich

### Inside Back Cover

Tricia Sloan guides Maria Williams 3rd W50 5km  
in the Wellington Road Champs

Photo - Sharon Wray

### Back Cover

Nina Preston WHAC W35, waves as she runs past  
in the NZ Road Relay championships

Photo - Sharon Wray





Dave Wilson and Emma Basset at the NZ Road Relay championships

PHOTO: Sharon Wray

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Ngauruhoe

PHOTO: courtesy of Laini Inivale

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# President's Report

by ANDREW STARK - NZMA President



What an interesting winter we have had! COVID-19 has certainly changed the way the world operates and will do for some time. Numerous local and national events had to be postponed or cancelled during the past few months. The NZ Cross Country Championships in Dunedin went ahead without Auckland, so were relegated to a 'challenge' event. The NZ Road Relay Championships went ahead in Feilding on 3 October and the NZ Road Championships in Auckland has been scheduled for the first weekend in November. Let's hope that goes ahead as planned.

Over the past few seasons, several 'stand alone' Masters Centres have struggled to find people to run their organisation. The challenge then translates to which Master's Centres are actually capable of organizing / hosting our track and field events. This season we have no North Island T&F Championships, which highlights this issue. We need to start thinking about where it can be held next year.

Across the country, several Athletics NZ Centres are also finding it difficult to find volunteers to run the sport. What is becoming evident is that Masters Centres that have a close working relationship with the local ANZ Centre can more effectively host our events. A challenge going forward for NZMA is to make sure the relationship between both groups is enhanced, so that the ANZ Centre helps us organise our events...a team effort.

This season the South Island T&F championships are being held in Dunedin and I suspect several North Islanders will attend. This meeting models what started in Canterbury several years ago. The master's champs will be held within a combined events and normal interclub meeting. This is the way of the future.

No doubt many of you will be helping officiate at your local Centre. On behalf of all athletes, thank you for all you do. Our sport would not survive if it were not for masters involvement. Good luck to you all for the season ahead.



Hokitika

**PHOTO:** courtesy of Laini Inivale

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# 2020 Athletics NZ Road Relay Championships

by Michael Wray

We should give full credit to both Feilding Moa and Athletics New Zealand for enabling the NZ Road Relays to go ahead. Auckland's status of being in level two and under Government guidance to continue to operate within smaller bubbles meant they were kept separate as much as possible and asked to maintain social distancing during the day; from what I witnessed both the organisers and athletes did their best to observe this requirement.

ANZ and Feilding Moa took great pleasure in announcing this race as the first national championship to be held anywhere in the world since March. The Feilding locals not even involved in athletics (but whose driveways were exploited by team vans) were heard repeating this with great pride. It turns out that British Athletics beat us to this first when they held their track and field nationals in early September. Regardless, thank you to Courtney Macdonald and Rob Dabb's teams for committing to delivering this event and giving our community what is the equivalent to the ANZ community's annual Christmas party!

Inevitably numbers were a little down this year (128 to 117), with clubs like Hamilton Hawks noticeably absent. By contrast, Wellington Scottish increased their presence and entered 19 teams across all grades, by far more than any other club.

There was a little controversy in the build-up to the event when a rule change was revealed to have been made without clubs noticing. The M40-49 grade was now the M35-49 grade. The last time the master's men grade was set to M35 was in 2004 and the change was reversed one year later in the wake of complaints. While the change makes sense, in as much as it aligns all events with a consistent age cut-off, the change not coming to light until clubs were putting in their entries created re-work at short notice in team formulations.

Nine teams contested the M35 grade. Defending champions, Wellington Scottish, had three teams and the 2019 runners-up Wellington Harriers were also back. We were guaranteed a new presence on the podium because the previous bronze medallists (Cambridge) were absent. The race produced very little drama. Scottish's seven runners (James Richardson, Geoff Ferry, Stephen Day, Paul Barwick, Rowan Hooper, Alasdair Saunders and Andrew Wharton) were all the fastest runners on their laps, making it gold in the grade for the fourth consecutive year. The second placed team recorded their first ever medal in the masters men grade. Owairaka's Julian Ng, Nick Moore, Simon Mace, Keith Burrows, Adam Gallagher, Adam Berry and Paul White were all the second fastest runners in the grade. This meant that Scottish's lead, 61s after lap one, merely increased with every ensuing lap and Owairaka successively increased the gap back to third all the way to the finish. Nick Moore came closest to achieving fastest lap for Owairaka, only one second

behind Geoff Ferry. Chris Mardon brought New Brighton Olympic in after lap one in third place, 17s behind Owairaka's Julian Ng and 11s ahead of Wellington Harriers' Richard Swan. Lake City's hopes were dented early when Adrian Lysaght discovered his second lap runner, Sjors Corporaal nowhere in sight. Sjors eventually arrived to take the baton after what was reported as some 60 to 90s. Wellington Harriers moved Dan Nixon up into third place during the second leg; they held this place to the end and the medal spots didn't vary at all during the last five legs.

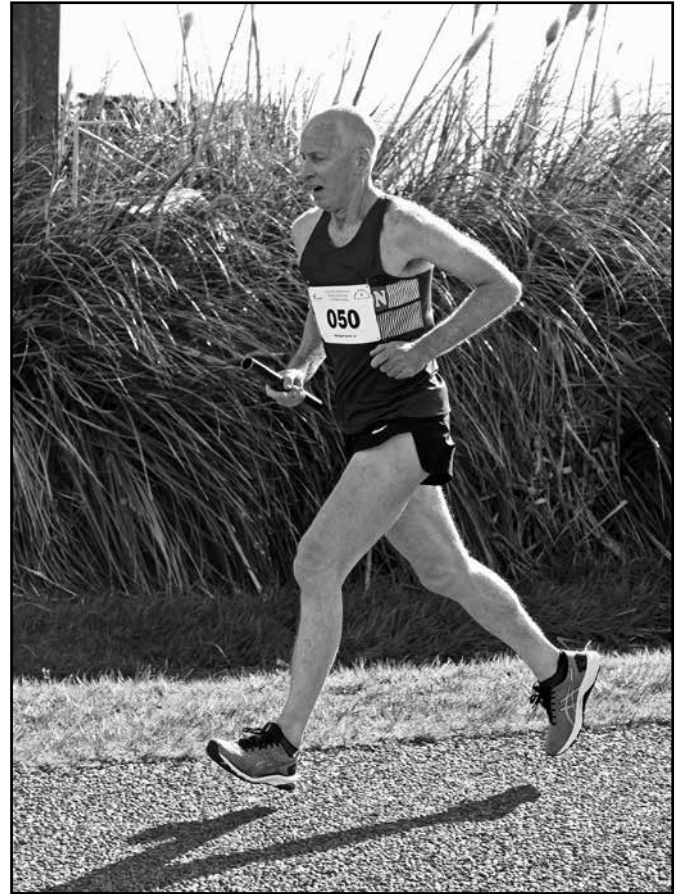
The MW 35 grade had just two teams, where Scottish were defending a title against the previous runners-up Wellington Harriers. Last year's bronze holders, Olympic, only had six masters women run so they spread them between senior women and social teams and did not have a W35 team. Emma Bassett gave Scottish an early lead on lap one running to a 51s lead. Mel Stevens, running against Doctor's orders with a nasty sinus infection, increased Scottish's lead by a further 23s and Carla Denny added a further 27s on leg three. Then on leg four Sarah Bonoma produced a storming lap for WHAC, turning a 1:41 deficit to a 1:22 advantage. Fiona Hayvice responded by returning Scottish to a 1:23 lead, so with two legs to go the race was looking to play out in Scottish's favour. However, never underestimate the drama of a relay. Emily Solsberg suffered from cramps and GI issues during her run, leaving her in some distress and lucky to even finish without being substituted. Helen Ewing took full advantage and delivered the baton to WHAC's Nat Hardaker with an unassailable lead of over eight minutes. Lindsay Barwick closed the lead down by two minutes but Wellington Harriers won the grade by 6:48.

In the M50 grade Scottish were seeking to be the sixth team to have won the grade three times in a row. The team that pushed them hard last year, Hamilton Hawks, were absent but Don Greig Racing Stables had a team featuring some high achieving runners and Owairaka were also lining up a good team. Supplementing them were perennial challengers Lake City and Wellington Harriers. The first leg was a close contest between DGRS' Jason Baillie and Scottish's Dave Kettles. Jason led to the final hill but Dave moved to the fore and finished 23s ahead. Owairaka's Peter Kenny finished 1:31 further back in third. Peter Stevens increased the Scottish lead, running fastest lap by 10s. Dan Coates moved Owairaka into second place, passing DGRS' Richard Bennett. Troy Harold and Tim Morrison ate into the deficit, running fastest legs to bring Scottish back down to a 64s lead before Gerard Gordon added 51s to the Scottish buffer. Tim Mitchell knocked a little off, running 4s quicker than Scottish's James Turner. Michael Wray started the last leg with a 1:51 lead and finished with Scottish 5:07 ahead to comfortably win. Owairaka were a long way clear for the silver





Emma Bassett Scottish W35a team



Alastair Kenworthy WHAC

medal, finishing over six minutes ahead of Don Greig Racing Stables in third.

The W50 grade became academic when neither of Hamilton Hawks or Wellington Harriers fielded a team to defend their medals from 2019. Scottish were back to defend the title, with one change to the winning team of 2019 – Helen Bradford replacing Trisha Sloan – and their only opponents were the Scottish B team. Consequently, Michele Allison, Melissa Moon, Helen Bradford, Anna Guy, Betty Harp and Maria Williams romped to a 53 minute victory.

The open 60s grade is one that has been dominated by Nelson since its introduction in 2012. Nelson had only failed to win in 2016 (when they couldn't get a team to Rotorua) and 2019 but Auckland University were the defending title holders from 2019 and they were back, along with third placed Christchurch Avon, setting up a good race in which Olympic, Wellington Harriers and Wellington Scottish were also hoping to feature. Andrew Barker gave Nelson an 86s lead, from Wellington Harriers' Paul May in lap one. Christchurch Avon's Roger Ward held third place, a mere second ahead of Chris Harp (Wellington Scottish) and Auckland Uni's Brett Katterns finished fifth only 13s further back. Christchurch Avon produced the fastest second lap time when John Gamblin ran 26s faster than Scottish's Phil Sadgrove and took the lead from Nelson's Murray Hart, while Todd Kriebel moved Wellington Harriers into third. Derek Shaw quickly made up the 8s deficit

on Avon's Dave Tyrrell and restored Nelson's lead but Auckland Uni's Steve Duxfield ran the fastest lap time and propelled the defending champions into second. Wellington Harriers Brian Hayes moved up into third as Christchurch Avon fell to fourth. The rotation of places continued into the fourth leg when Christchurch Avon returned to the front thanks to a strong run from Peter Richards. Nelson's Graeme Lear kept his team in second with Auckland Uni in third. In the final two legs, the challenge from Wellington Harriers and Wellington Scottish faded away, leaving the same teams to populate the podium as in 2019 and only the order to be determined. Fastest leg six came from Nelson's Tim Cross but Christchurch Avon's Andrew Stark produced a fast finish to regain the lead he had lost earlier and keep his team in the front. Auckland Uni were now several minutes behind and despite Steve Fairley running the fastest time, last year's gold medallists had to settle for bronze. Nelson's Ian Carter ran the second quickest last leg, sweeping past Christchurch Avon's Victor Gamperle and securing the title for Nelson.

Wellington Scottish secured the Top Club trophy for the third consecutive year, having to rely on the tie-breaking countback after finishing on the same points as Wellington Harriers. University of Canterbury were third.

Next year the Road Relays will return to Canterbury, where the country's best relay course from Takahe to Akaroa will be Nationals, a status it has held thirteen times previously.

PHOTOS: Sharon Wray



Nick Burrow New Brighton Olympic M35-49



Winners Masters Women 50+ Scottish 1st and 2nd Tricia Sloan, Maria Williams, Melissa Moon, Betty Harp, Helen Bradford, Michele Allison MW50B and Terri Grimmett MW50



Carla Denny Scottish W35



Top Club winners Wellington Scottish Athletics patron Alan Stevens and President Michael Wray



Karen Dravitzki - Wellington Scottish



Winners Masters Men 35-49 1st Wellington Scottish M35A, 2nd Owairaka Athletics M35, 3rd Wellington Harrier Athletics Club M35



Winners of the Open Walkers 1st Trentham United Harrier and Walkers 1, 2nd Wellington Scottish Walk and 3rd Trentham United Harriers and Walkers 2



Lindsay Barwick Scottish W35a



Winners M35-49 1st Wellington Scottish M35A, 2nd Owairaka Athletics M35, 3rd Wellington Harriers Athletics Club M35



Richard Martin Olympic Harriers M35



Winners Open 60+ 1st Athletics Nelson, 2nd Christchurch Avon, 3rd Auckland University Track Club



Fiona Hayvice Wellington Scottish W35a

# 2020 World Wide Virtual Masters Challenge

by Lester Laughton

On Sunday 19 July at 9.30am, we met at the Dunedin Caledonian Athletics ground to compete in throwing events for this challenge. Fiona Harvey is due a huge vote of thanks for her never tiring efforts in arranging this, and many past events, for us. Competitors were canvassed by email and a suitable date organised which had to fit in with other users of the grounds. Added to that Fiona sourced the necessary equipment and throwing implements, along with a tea and coffee break with freshly made savoury scones and energy treats.

It was a cool morning in Dunedin, with a light frost. The sun was just appearing above the eastern Port Chambers hills as we commenced throwing, and it continued throughout the morning in a clear blue sky, making for most pleasant conditions.

Kelly and Toni had travelled the two hours from Waimate, Noni from Waikouaiti and her friend, Jim from Wellington, Lester and Melva from Manapouri. Alison was the only local, along with Fiona the official. Melva was the recorder.

First event, the hammer throw, Kelly showed she can still master three rotations, (most of the time) and had the furthest throw of 29.22m. Toni threw the longest shot at 8.56m. Morning "smoko" break was very welcome at this stage. Thank you again Fiona for being so thoughtful.

Lester surprised himself with a discus of 35.42m for his last throw. The javelin is not the favourite of many pentathlon throwers. Toni showed us how with a 25.77m throw. Jim was a bit off his usual best with 17.66m, and Alison threw a commendable 18.74m. Last event, the weight throw, as always, is an interesting one. Kelly and Toni both throwing the 20lb weight did very well with 9.66 and 8.27 respectively. Lester managed 11.63 with this. Alison threw a very good 10.37m, and enjoyed throwing the lighter weight, having just turned 60.

Most of us were feeling the pinch at this stage, but the ever determined Kelly then threw the super heavy weight, which for her W35 age group was the 35lb. With a little advice from Jim, she opted for just one turn, and threw 7.16m. Lester was briefly tempted to have a throw so that Kelly could have a rest between her efforts, but common sense aimed at preservation of the body took over.

Thank you to Melva who did the calling and recording. She did seem to like her heavy fur coat and beanie as sitting still was a bit chilly. It was a very enjoyable days throwing, despite very little training as such by any of the six participants. Afterwards the Waimate ladies headed back home and the rest of us had a most welcome meal at the Law Courts Hotel in Dunedin. A place we all highly recommend.

It is such a pity that more throwers had not participated. I did canvass a few, and got such responses as "I'm not well enough prepared", "Dunedin might be too cold at that time". I do have to agree, Dunedin can be cold, but that can be any time of the year, and as for preparation, well who can really want to go out for a throws session when it is 2 degrees, or raining, or thick fog. Fair enough. There are some with real health issues who cannot compete, which we all do feel sad for. The rest of you - "Get off the couch".

I always think that it is satisfying just being able to throw. An outing such as we had is so much better than just going out for a few throws on your own. It is nice to compete against and sometimes beat a few of your key rivals from time to time, but my main competitor is myself. If I can throw near to previously I am happy. On the other hand it can be rather difficult dealing with diminishing distances and a less responsive body, with arthritic joints here and there, but that is life.

For the record, Noni still competes regularly, and she has had both knee joints replaced. Jim, at the tender age of 89 years, is a great example to all and an inspiration to keep on keeping on. His key message is that if you can keep to the same or similar distances as you age and the gear gets lighter, you are doing very well. Not many can do so. He played his annual game of soccer last week. Just half a game this year he tells us. Late May 2021 he is planning to celebrate his 90th birthday in Japan, just prior to competing in the World Masters Games.

Noni, Jim and Fiona were back at the "Cale" on Tuesday 21st at 1pm to officiate the long and triple jump for Alison. It was a balmy 16 degrees and she jumped into a slight head wind. If it had been a proper athletic meeting with a wind gauge, she would have certainly taken the W60 Otago triple jump record.

First Name	Surname	Grade	Shotput	Place	Discus	Place	Hammer	Place
Kelley	Charles	W35	8.25	4	25.24	3	29.22	6
Toni	Oudemans	W40	8.89	3	24.25	6	23.45	8
Alison	Newall	W60					23.10	13
Noni	Callander	W70	7.15	8	17.66	7	19.36	8
Lester	Laughton	M65			35.42	15	27.21	14
Brian	Senior	M80						
Jim	Blair	M85	6.43	4	16.12	5	19.76	5



Victoria Humphries 1st W50 5km in the Wellington Road Champs



Michele Allison looking strong heading back up the hill - 1st W60 5km in the Wellington Road Champs

# Additional background and thoughts on the Challenge

by Laini Inivale and Noni Callander

Responding to the disruption of the northern masters athletics seasons high level competition by COVID-19, a worldwide virtual challenge was dreamed up. Birthed by Masters Athletics throwing stalwarts John Seto (USA) of [www.mastersrankings.com](http://www.mastersrankings.com) fame, Gottfried Gassenbauer (AUT) and Guy Dirkin (GBR), they embarked on the challenge of organising this huge and unprecedented undertaking.

An introductory worldwide email on 16 May 2020 from the virtual LOC unveiled the audacious concept. Over 1500 athletes from around the world took part, including 9 NZ athletes. Six of the seven throwers even organised to throw at the same time at the Caledonian Ground in Dunedin on 19 July 2020 and were thus in the B section. Throwers results are in the table below. Two days after throwing Alison Newall returned to the ground to tackle the long and triple jump and pole vault.

Two other athletes took part at an officially recognised meet and thus were in the A section. Brayden Grant (M35) ran 100m in 11.58 placing him 4th in the A section and 10th overall. His 50.32 in the 400m placed him 1st in the A Section and 2nd overall. Jacqueline Wilson (W70) recorded 32:56 in the 5000m walk placing her 1st in the A section and 3rd overall, and in the 10km walk recorded 1:06.29 placing her 1st in the A section and second overall.

With the current state of the world, virtual competitions may become by necessity the new normal. Seeing the fun these pioneering masters athletes had writing history, I (Laini) kinda now wish I had made the effort to enter. Well done to the Magnificent Seven.



L-R Toni, Noni, Kelley, Lester, Jim and Alison

PHOTO: Otago Masters Athletics Facebook Page

Javelin	Place	Weight	Place	Super Weight	Place	Throws Pent	Place
18.37	3	10.01	2	7.16	1	2114	2
26.15	2	8.27	6			2255	3
18.74	8					2627	7
13.51	6	8.56	6			2993	6
		11.63	11			2597	13
		14.41	2				
17.66	3	8.26	4			2634	3

# Bruce Eric McPhail (26/01/1937 – 21/07/2020)

## Foreword by Derek Shaw

The legendary masters sprinter and former All Black Bruce McPhail died on 21 July 2020 aged 83. Bruce won many NZ Masters Athletics championship titles as he progressed through the 5 year age groups from M40 to M65 in the 100m, 200m, 400m, long and high jump during the 1980s and 1990s. He held many NZ masters records in these age groups and still holds some 15 NZ Masters and 9 NZMA Championship records in the 100m, 200m, 400m and long jump. He competed regularly at World and Oceania Masters Championships and enjoyed considerable success. In 1983 at the World champs in Puerto Rico he won silver in the M45 200m and 400m and bronze in the 100m. At the 1989 World Champs in Melbourne he won silver in the M50 200m and bronze in 100m and at the 1989 champs in Oregon the bronze in the M50 100m.

The following article on Bruce McPhail by Arthur Grayburn was published in the June 1993 issue of *Vetline* and is reprinted here so readers can gain an appreciation of his achievements in athletics and rugby.

## Profile by Arthur Grayburn

“Seek and you shall find” could well be the title of this story on Bruce McPhail. The time was January 1978 and the place was the Tahunanui Motor Camp in Nelson where a chance meeting of my wife Merle, Bruce and Marilyn and myself took place. Veteran athletics had been established in New Zealand for three years and members were encouraged to recruit those whom they thought might be interested in joining. This was an ideal opportunity as Bruce and I had attended the same secondary school, Ashburton High, and we both lived in the Nelson District in the early 1960s.

Bruce initially was hesitant about becoming a Veteran athlete but with a little persuasion he agreed to come along to the Canterbury Veteran Athletic Champs, which were being held in a months time at English Park. During the next few weeks Bruce must have done some solid training as in all of the events in which he participated at the championships he displayed great form and ability. It was obvious that one of the brightest stars that we have had in NZ Veteran Athletics was on his way. At the NZ Veteran Championships held at Blenheim the next month Bruce established himself on the national scene and has not missed a Provincial or NZ Championship since that time.

His recent tally of six golds, a silver and a bronze at the recent Oceania Games in Norfolk Island confirmed his ability in a wide range of disciplines and showed that he is the best sprinter, jumper, pentathlete that NZ Veteran Athletics has produced.

In the 100m and 200m he has not been beaten in 15 years of competition and only rarely in the 400m has his fellow competitor Malcolm Fraser been able to finish ahead of him.

With his fine speed it is to be expected that he would be an excellent long jumper but it is unusual for a sprinter to also shine in the high jump.

From a very young person Bruce displayed sprinting ability well above the average and this talent he used with great effect on them rugby field where his explosive running, particularly over the first 20m left many an opposition winger gasping at his shadow. He played for Mid-Canterbury before moving to Christchurch to represent Canterbury in the late 1950s. The form shown in provincial games led to his being selected for the All Blacks against the Lions 1959 touring team. He had the difficult job of marking one of the Lion’s star wingers, Tony O’Reilly, in the first and fourth tests. Bruce played in the curtain raiser at Lancaster Park in the match Canterbury v Combined Services. Sitting in the No. 5 stand that afternoon I was in a great position to witness Bruce’s elusive play as he set a NZ record by scoring seven tries.

Shortly, after this we both moved to the Nelson district. Bruce was Dalgety’s grain and seed agent while I was appointed to a sole charge school at Harakeke. Bruce was always encouraging youngsters and his loan of his All Black and British Lions jerseys to my school was very much appreciated.

As was to be expected the Nelson Rugby Union were overjoyed to have someone of Bruce’s ability move into the province. Some of his most brilliant play came in his years in the area. He was particularly spectacular in the 1960 game against the French side scoring two fine tries.

During his early years in Christchurch Bruce ran regularly at Rugby Park where he was to the fore in the sprints. However while he ran in the provincial championships, like many other rugby players he did not appear to reach his full potential. Indeed some of his times as a veteran athlete are little inferior to those he recorded as a senior athlete.

His first World Games were those held in Christchurch in 1982 where he experienced the misfortune of being firstly placed third in the 100m only for a further check of the photo-finish to drop him back a place. This appeared to give him more determination and in 1983 he was in exceptional form at the American Championships at Houston and at the World Games in Puerto Rico. His next World Games were those in Rome in 1985 followed by the Melbourne Games in 1987. Opposition has always been tough in the sprints and here Bruce has often had to compete against that outstanding Australian sprinter, Reg Austin.

The American Championships in San Diego and the World Games in Eugene were very happy hunting grounds for Bruce in 1989. He did not go to Turku in 1991 but has his eyes keenly set on the 1993 World Veteran Championships in Miyazaki. Already the influential newspaper “The Australian” is picking

him as one of the likely stars. Several Oceania Games have been keenly contested and many times he has brought the New Zealand flag to the fore with some fine running.

He has not limited himself only to veteran athletics and at present he represents South Canterbury on the Centre of Athletics Canterbury. Much of the strength and growth of veteran athletics in the Ashburton district comes from his enthusiasm and encouragement. In his administration duties on the National Executive he has taken over the very demanding portfolio of Uniforms and Merchandise. This he has handled with great efficiency and has introduced many new ideas, which have helped to give NZ athletes a great image which makes them very distinctive at international meetings.

### Chronicle

**Veteran Athletics:** 100, 200, 400m – has won almost all of his age group races in these events at both provincial and national level since 1978. Winner of similar events at South Island Championships since 1981.

**International Meetings:** Winner of sprint events at Oceania Games and American Championships. At World Games has won 3 silver and 5 bronze medals 1981 – 1989.

**Pentathlon:** Regular winner at provincial, national and Oceania level.

**Long and High Jump:** Winner of all provincial and national titles since 1978.

**Records:** He set and holds at least 17 provincial records, 13 national and 15 championship records. Three Oceania Games records.

**Rugby:** Played six games on the wing for Mid Canterbury in 1956, Played 42 games for Nelson Province scoring 30 tries, 1960-63. Played 24 games for Canterbury scoring 23 tries, 1957-59. Played two Tests for the All Blacks v British Lions in 1959. Counting trials and combined teams Bruce played 85 first class games scoring 73 tries – an outstanding record.

# Charles Eric de Lautour (25/07/1920 – 14/04/2020)

by Fay Riley

Anzac Day dawned and as we stood at the end of our driveway during the lockdown, strains of the Last Post were drifting across the Waikarao Estuary. It was a solemn moment to remember a comrade and friend who passed on in his 100th year. Such a beautiful morning, brilliant sunrise, it all could not have been better. As Eric was very much a morning person and a Second World War veteran, it was a very sobering moment of remembrance and reflection.

I had known Eric for many years – long before he joined the Veterans (now Masters) and enjoyed everything that it entailed. His many years up and down the hills on the farm in Wairoa stood him in great stead for all his marathons (mainly the Fletcher in Rotorua) and other distance events.

After moving to Te Puke, he joined Te Puke Harriers and really enjoyed the cross country running at Brawn's Farm at No.2 Road, Te Puke. He had a lot of strength and stamina. On moving to Tauranga, he joined Tauranga Ramblers and was a regular competitor in track and cross country events. He was an age group World champion and record holder for many track events. It was a great way to see the world and he and his wife, Rae, loved to travel. After Rae passed away, his daughter Kay accompanied him.

Eric loved to go "off-road" and was thrilled when my son, Clive Reynolds, invited him to run Mt Te Aroha. This was something he had always wanted to do but needed to have support. Sheer delight on accomplishing the summit was a moment to remember. He went on many other trail runs with us while in his

80's and acquitted himself remarkably well, however Te Aroha was the stand-out. Like a true champion, he would give any event 100% and support other competitors.

Eric loved travelling and competing in Italy where he served during the War and established many friends. He also acquired a conversational grasp of the language. He and his brother attended a reunion of war veterans in Italy when both were in their nineties. Eric treasured this experience. His international track battles were mainly against Italians and a Mexican.

On his return from the War, he was in very poor health and nobody expected him to survive far less get to his 100th year. By will-power and a strong determination to make the most of life through fitness he was able to enjoy a life full of challenges and pleasures. He set up a gym at home and a nearby reserve had some challenging features to build stamina.

As if this was not enough to keep him busy, he also had an interest in gardening with a kumara patch and an assortment of apple trees. It gave him a lot of pleasure to see his children and grandchildren competing and to be able to encourage them.

It was sad that there could not be a funeral due to COVID-19 lock-down to farewell him and grieve with family and friends. A get-together is planned soon. If we can all live such a healthy and long life lived to the max like Eric, it would indeed be a bonus. He has left behind many memories for us all and our sincere condolences go to his family and all who were associated with him.

# Ronald John Stevens (1932-2020)

by Peter Coughlan

The New Zealand running fraternity recently farewelled one of its most recognized and respected members; Ron Stevens. His running career resembled the 'game of two halves' philosophy. Initially as a senior, it rose to a crescendo in the late 1950s – early 60s, tapered off as he approached veteran status (he never 'embraced' the new description) and became more prominent as he moved through the masters age grades, finishing with his domination of the M75s.

His best achievements at the national senior level were in the 3 and 6 miles (5 and 10k for youngsters), and the marathon. His senior running period coincided with the 'golden years' of NZ athletics (approximately 1957–64) where he competed against all of Lydiard's charges and well-performed Canterbury athletes such as Clarrie Reece, John Macdonald and the late Bill Richards.

Ron was born in Oamaru on 11 November 1932. His father Reg, who had also been a very good runner, was a primary school teacher and later a headmaster. As such the family moved many times to various school postings, and is why Ron ended up doing his secondary schooling in Karamea. After leaving with school certificate, he worked for five years in a sawmill. He felt this would help build up his strength and even when in his early 70s he could still lift hay bales to shoulder height. With nearly a year in bed on two occasions due to rheumatic fever, Ron's physique of 1.6m and 51kg implied neither speed nor strength.

Whilst attending high school and due to his health, his doctor advised him not to play any vigorous sport. Consequently his sporting career got off to a late start. Ron wasn't always good at taking medical advice and when he first came to Christchurch he played a season for the Lancaster Park Cricket Club.

Ron moved to Christchurch in 1951 and began studying for a B.A. at the University of New Zealand (Canterbury). He continued his body-building regime by working part-time for Elliotts' Carriers. Emerging from university clutching his B.A. in English, he went to Teachers' College to become a primary school teacher. After teaching at various schools and completing an M.A. (Ed), he returned to Teachers' College to lecturer in English. He had a brief stint of "missionary service" at a university in Armidale, near Canberra, trying to teach the Australians how to use language properly. (Not sure how successful he was!). Also while at Teachers' College, he co-authored a language and reading educational programme, named LARIC. It was used quite widely in NZ and is apparently still used in some places overseas.

Ron retired in the late 1980s citing deafness. Neville Reid would tell you Ron was always half a pace ahead of him while training, the excuse being that it was necessary for hearing purposes. Yeah right! He used to call it "hanging on from the front".

Ron joined the Olympic Harrier Club in 1954 (five years after it began), and remained a member until it amalgamated with New Brighton in 2011. He joined the combined club briefly before having to retire from running. Ron was prominent in the administration of the Olympic Club, recognized by being made a life member. He served as president, and with Noeleen and the late Dave Bates he spent many years editing the Club's newsletter, the Marathon Post. He also wrote articles for Vetline.

Whilst documenting all of his achievements is impossible, his greatest achievement was breaking the NZ 15 mile (24.1k) track record on the grass track at Rugby Park. A surface he didn't favour, preferring the road. This was truly an incredible effort by the wee man. With his short but relentless choppy stride and vigorous arm action, he was "poetry in motion". Ron time of 77:42.5s took 2:38 off the record. It certainly was his "finest hour" (and a bit).

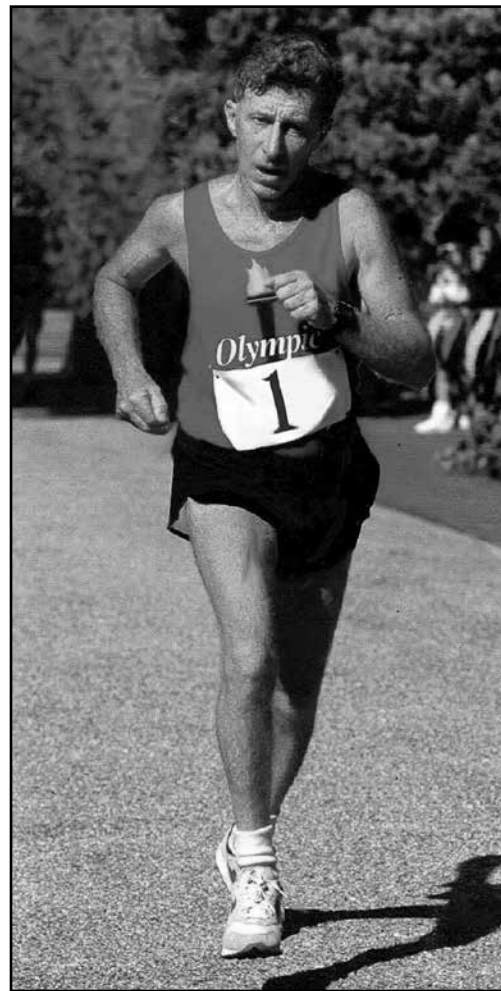
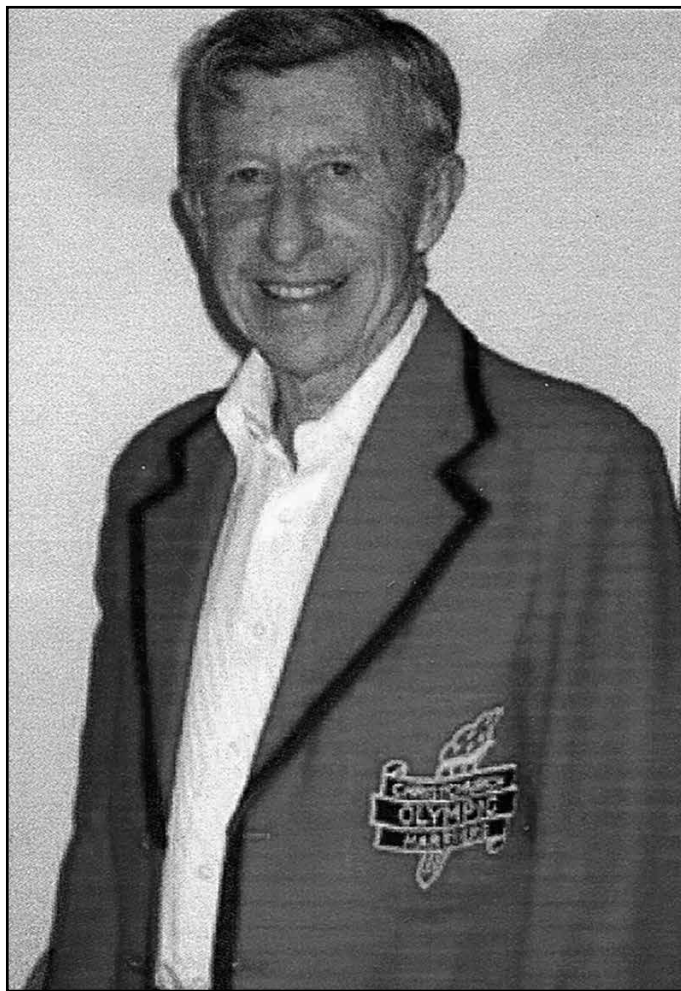
When he entered the masters grades, he remained competitive with the seniors, especially in the first few years. Anyone who was younger than him was "fair game". He particularly enjoyed it as he approached the M60 grade, where some runners who got to see only the back of his singlet weren't in his grade or even from his generation!

As he moved through the masters grades, Canterbury masters titles and records continued to be the norm but NZ records were much more difficult to come by. However, as aging and attrition go hand-in-hand, Ron could start to see light at the end of the tunnel. Initially it was, unfortunately, the proverbial train in the form of the late Derek Turnbull which made records very challenging indeed. Ron turned his attention to the various M75 records and began to relish the prospect of picking off at least some of them, if not all. These ranged from 800m through to 10,000m – an incredible range – calling on the very best of the two main attributes of middle-distance running, stamina and speed.

His fitness continued to improve so that when he turned 75 he 'hit the ground running' and in 2007 he set a new record for 10,000m of 43:51; then in 2008 he reduced it again to 43:36. However, just when you thought you'd seen everything, he turned 77, and it was "all on" again. He set a new M75 record for the 800m (2:55.41), followed by the 1500m (5:53.43) and 5000m (21:27.9). Only the 3000m record was needed to give him a "full house".

Although the 3000m still remained out of reach, it was *deja vu* for the 10,000m. A few weeks after turning 77, he absolutely demolished his own record, with a time of 42:04.32. This was possibly one of the best displays of controlled and sustained distance running by a masters athlete for many years. Probably





the most amazing (but perhaps little-known) aspect of this effort was that he went through the half-way mark well inside his existing NZ 5000m record, in approximately 20:52; and even though he slowed a little in the second half, he was also still just inside his existing 5000m record. (So how do I know so much about this – I was one of the “statues” that he lapped 5 times.)

In early 2010 he carried his record-breaking form into the New Year, setting a new record for the 3000m of 12:19.68, and 21:03 for 5000m. Finally, “Rocket Ron, the Flying Fossil” had the full set.

In 2011 Ron began to experience difficulty when trying to run and was diagnosed with atrial fibrillation. As he could only run a short distance before having a walk, it became clear that the “curtain had come down” on what was a very long, and truly remarkable running career. The M80 record holders breathed a sigh of relief!

His training methods were somewhat different from the Lydiard-type regime of the time. He tended towards running less distance but with more intensity, and I’m not aware of him doing any more than 80 miles (130 km) a week. The core of his training was regular sessions “flat stick”, with recovery runs in between. Two and ten mile effort runs (3 and 16k approximately) were his favourites.

Although he used to train seven days a week in his earlier senior years, at some point he reduced this to six and when I asked

one day about this change he said it was a “Road to Damascus” thing.

Some of his training exploits in later years were truly remarkable. He’d go out for an hour at six o’clock with one lady or eight o’clock with another. Then he’d come and do a run with me; sometimes having already been out in the morning, and then go with another group in the evening. And that wasn’t always the end of it either, as he would often go to a Yoga class. He also enjoyed ballroom dancing – the real “Fred and Ginger” stuff that involved being up on his toes half the time. Imagine what that was like a couple of hours after a track session in spikes!

Outside of running and education, he had several other interests. He was very active in his church, designed and built his own house and at one point he bought a small truck, which benefited many. He also worked part-time for a funeral director and was a funeral celebrant. He was also an enthusiastic and competent photographer. Among Ron’s many qualities was a marvelous sense of humour. The more subtle the joke or comment and the more he had to think about it, the more he enjoyed it – and boy could he laugh.

He was a truly remarkable person in many ways, and I will miss him enormously, as I’m sure many others will. Ron, “you may not always be remembered, but never forgotten”.

R.I.P. old friend.

# Who is Killian Jornet?

by George White

He just might be the fittest athlete on the planet!

The average time for a mountaineer to reach the summit of Mt Everest from Base Camp is 40 to 45 days and that is in a team with oxygen and fixed ropes. On 22 May 2017 Jornet did it in 26 hours without oxygen or ropes. Not bad – but he had a bit of a stomach bug and wasn't pleased with his effort so 5 days later he did it again - in just 17 hours. This was after climbing Cho Oyu (6th highest mountain in the world) on 7 May. The Everest Sherpas call him "The monkey".

Kilian Jornet is a Spanish mountaineer, speed climber and ultra-marathon runner. He holds many records in ski mountaineering and mountain running. Two weeks after Everest he entered a half marathon in Norway that climbed nearly a mile (an 8% grade) and won in 1:30:00. Six weeks later Jornet took on another major challenge - the Hardrock 100 Endurance Race. This is an ultra-marathon in Southern Colorado which covers 10,000m of elevation over 100 miles. Initially he didn't do well, tripping at the 13 mile mark and dislocating his shoulder. Not deterred, Jornet popped his own shoulder back into place and ran the remaining 87 miles using his running vest as a makeshift sling. A little over 24 hours later he won the race – his third win in four years. By September he had also won the Mont Blanc Marathon, the 31 km Swiss Sierre Zinal, the Scottish Gen Coe Skyline trail race (55 km) and the Marato Pirineu Marathon, taking 17 minutes off the race record. In addition during 2017 on the world scene in Ski Mountaineering, he won the Vertical race and was 2nd overall.

He has run across entire landmasses (Corsica) and mountain ranges (the Pyrenees) and regularly runs all day eating only wild berries and drinking only from streams. In 2009, when just 21 years old, Jornet ran the 165-mile (and 6000m+ elevation change) Tahoe Rim Trail. In the middle of the night he took a wrong turn, which added perhaps six miles to his run. He still finished in 38 hours 32 minutes, beating the previous best time by more than seven hours. When he reached the finish line, he looked as if he'd just finished a fun run and when asked how he felt about the extra distance he ran – he said "more kilometres – more fun"!

Always after a new challenge - in 2012 Jornet set out to claim fastest ascent and descent records on six of the world's most famous mountains. Everest represented the culmination of this venture. This was his "Summits of My Life" project. He basically took trail running principles and applied them to vertical routes with the following results:

- Mont Blanc, 4,810m. In July 2013 – set the record for the ascent and descent in 4 hours and 57 minutes;
- Matterhorn, 4,478m. In August 2013 – set the record for the ascent and descent in 2 hours and 52 minutes;

- Kilimanjaro, 5,895m. In October 2013 – set the record for the ascent and descent in 7 hours and 14 minutes;
- Denali, 6,168m. In June 2014 – set new record for the ascent and descent 11 hours and 48 minutes, breaking the previous record by 5 hours and 6 minutes;
- Aconcagua, 6,960m. In December 2014 - set the record for the ascent and descent in 12 hours and 49 minutes;
- Mount Everest, 8,848m. On 22 May 22 2017 Jornet summited Mount Everest climbing without fixed ropes or supplemental oxygen; he reached the top via a new route in 26 hours. On 27 May he reached the summit again in 17 hours.

Along the way in 2015 with climber Ueli Steck, Jornet climbed the infamous North Face of the Eiger via the classic 1930s route. This route typically takes 3 days but they reached summit in 4 hours and were back down in town in less than 10 hours.

Jornet has been logging over 1200 hours of training per year since his late teens – that's an **average** of over 3 hours a day, including climbing 600,000m of total ascent every year - and yet still had time for a degree in exercise science. His physiological statistics are nothing short of phenomenal with a VO2 max an incredible 92 (elite endurance athletes range from 70 to 85!), a resting heart rate of 33 and a lung capacity of 5.3 litres – almost 1.5 litres more than an average male of the same height.

Born in 1987 he was 18 months old when his mother took him on a seven-hour hike in the Pyrenees and we are told he never cried or fussed. At the age of 3 he completed a 7.5 mile cross country ski race and climbed Aneto 3, the highest mountain in the Pyrenees - 3,404 m. A year later he climbed the Breithorn (4,164 m) on the Swiss - Italy border. His mother states her mission was to make Killian tired – she always failed.

He started ski mountaineering at the age of 12 and at 16 he became a junior member of the Spanish national ski mountaineering team. He has raced as a senior since 2007.

Last year was no less impressive than previous years - he is not slowing down – last year he set the 24-hour uphill skiing record at 23,864 meters and amongst other things won the Sierre-Zinal race for a seventh time smashing almost four minutes off the course record. He also won the Pikes Peak Marathon. He did this on a weekly plan as follows:

- Tempo run: 30-35km at 3:30-3:50m/km;
- Uphill training: 3x700m at 20-24 minutes;
- Threshold intervals: 3x5000 (at close to 15 min) / 4x2000 (at close to 6 min) then 5km, 4km, 3km, 2km and 1km;
- Intervals: 10x400 (at just over a minute) / 10x200 (at about 35s) / 10x600 (at about 100s);

- Two easy mountain run: 25-30K with 1500-2000m of elevation gain;
- A technical mountain run: 15-20K with 3000-4000m of elevation gain in scrambling terrain (taking between 4 to 10 hours);

In January this year, Jornet challenged his ski partner and world-class BASE jumper Tom Erik Heimen, to a race up and down one of the most-iconic climbing mountains in the world - Romsdalshorn, Norway. Both would have to climb up between 400 and 450m and descend - Jornet doing so on foot and Heimen BASE-jumping down to the bottom. Jornet has no issue ascending, finishing in just over 30 minutes before beginning

his descent, crossing Heimen still on the way up. At the top 15 minutes later Heimen jumped - hitting the ground two minutes after take-off to finish in 53:53, but Jornet made it to the bottom in a time of 52:26.

There are many amazing YouTube videos of Jornet running up mountains and this one of the Romsdalshorn is a good example. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6dgm5MQPGz8>

I will leave you with some of Jornet's philosophy:

"Thinking that what you're doing isn't that important actually makes things much easier", he says. "I have seen people who are really well prepared, but then on the day of the race they put themselves under so much pressure that they don't perform".

# IAU Six Hour Virtual Global Solidarity Run

by Michael Wray

The IAU 6hr Virtual Global Solidarity Run took place on 30 August. This event was an attempt by the International Association of Ultrarunners to replace cancelled events with a form of international competition and each country's athletics association selected athletes as they would for a conventional event. More than 400 runners from 34 countries took part.

The New Zealand team consisted of three men (Andrew McDowall, Wayne Botha and Stuart Hughes) and six women (Mel Aitken, Fiona Hayvice, Emily Solsberg, Emma Bassett, Dawn Tuffrey and Debrah Breedt). The first four of those women were all from the same club, Wellington Scottish, so they planned to run mostly together.

Mel Aitken ran from Upper Hutt, following the Hutt River Trail to Petone and then the Wellington Bays coastline. The original plan was to finish at the Scottish clubrooms 15 minutes before the Saturday afternoon club runs started, providing a welcoming crowd for her finish. However, a missed turn after 3km sent Mel down the wrong side of the river and to an eventual dead-end 3km later, requiring her to backtrack. Consequently, Mel's eventual finish came in Houghton Bay after 73.20km. This distance is a NZ record, though I am unsure whether the virtual nature of the run prevents it from being formally recognised by Athletics NZ.

Fiona, Emily and Emma all set off from Eastbourne and followed the coast all the way around the bays. Given the strong northerlies, it was a brave course choice. A difficult first 16km eventually allowed them to turn southward and enjoy some assistance for the next 14km. Beyond that, their run alternated

between head winds and tail winds as they followed the contours of the coastline.

The worst part of the run was the 4km heading north from Miramar to Point Halsey, where achieving any forward motion was a challenge. Emily started to fall back from the other two in this section. Fortunately, the women had a lot of support as club members turned out to run alongside them for periods. Sharon Wray also accompanied them the whole way in a car, delivering sustenance and fluids as required, in addition to photographing their experience. And because the object is to record as much distance as possible, rather than arrive at a given finish point, Emma and Fiona were able to run back and forth once they passed Point Halsey to allow Emily to rejoin them and the three to re-group.

Around 52km, Emily had fallen behind Emma and Fiona again and decided to leave the coastline and turn inland towards the Scottish clubrooms. Emily arrived at the clubrooms with five minutes remaining of the six hours, so spent those minutes running loops of the adjacent park, recording 56.40km for her run.

Fiona and Emma continued around Wellington's southern coastline to Owhiro Bay, where Fiona pulled away a little from Emma towards the end. Emma recorded 64.26km and Fiona 65.56km.

Elsewhere, Dawn Tuffrey ran 69.09km, Deborah Breedt 58.58km, Andrew McDowall 72.84km, Wayne Botha 60.47km and Stuart Hughes 41.71km.

PHOTOS: Sharon Wray



L to R: Emily Sosberg, Emma Bassett and Fiona Hayvice make their way around the eastern bays of Wellington Harbour

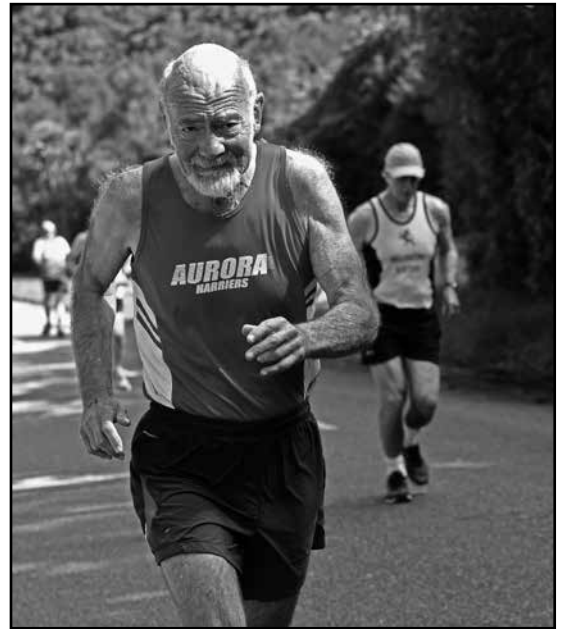


Emma Bassett, Fiona Hayvice, Spike (Fiona's son) and Emily Solsberg

## Wellington Road Championships



L to R: Phil Sadgrove, Gerard Gordon and Nicholas Bagnall



Hadley Bond M70 5km



Stephen Day 3rd M35, Matt Moloney



Betty Harp 2nd W60 5km

# Neil Fleming

by Judy Chandler

We farewell our good friend Neil, who in his 84th year, left us on 21 July 2020. A veteran/masters gold medal athlete - he competed on track, cross country, road and relay races. He was a marathon runner, triathlete, and a half and full ironman competitor. "He loved to run, as a youngster and through his teenage years - he was always a runner", says his wife Jan. He belonged to and competed for the Putaruru Club.

During our early Waikato years of Veteran Athletics, we sometimes held our committee meetings at Neil and Jan's farm, initially near Tirau and later at Pond Rd, Matamata - this was special and great fun to drive there.

Neil's specialist track events were the 5000m and 10000m. At the 1999 NZ Masters champs in Christchurch he ran the 5000m in 19:55.8 to claim the bronze in the M60 grade and claimed the silver medal in the 10000m in 41:31.50. In cross country and road races he always did well. At the 1990 NZ Cross Country Champs in Masterton he was 11th in the field of 28 in the M50 grade. At the 1992 NZ Road Champs in Cambridge he won the M55 10k by a second in a time of 37:12. He also won his age group at the 1992 NZ Cross Country Champs held in Whanganui. He completed 26 Rotorua Marathons and in the results located he won his M50 age group in 2:52.27 in 1987, in 1990 his time of 3:01.38 placed him 7th in the M50 grade, in 1993 he won his M55 age group in 3:06.40 and was second in the M65 age group in 2003 in 3:33.12.

He completed many triathlons, including some in Canada, France and Australia. After moving to Taupo, Neil was soon helping out at the Taupo Ironman events. One day he decided to have a go himself. Firstly, he had to learn to swim, which was not easy as swimming never came easy for him. At the age of 67, he entered his first Ironman, only to suffer from hypothermia during his swim and needed to be helped out of the water. After this there was no stopping him. He went on to complete 10 Taupo Ironman events with the last one being in his 80th year. He made the finish with seven minutes to go before the cut off time.

One year in Japan he won his age group in a Half Ironman and this entitled him to enter the Kona Ironman in Hawaii. He went on to complete five Kona events, with his best placing being second in his age group.

He was also a keen participant in relays too, such as the Kaimai Relay, in those days when we were allowed to have races on the road. In 1986, he helped organise the Radio Forestland Tree to Sea 80km Ultra Race from Putaruru to Mount Maunganui, which also included a 4 x 20km relay event.

Neil also competed in distance events at World Veteran / Masters Championship events in Rome in 1985, Japan in 1993, Durban, South Africa in 1997, Gateshead, England in 1999 and Brisbane, Australia in 2001. In Durban, he competed in the M60 grade and ran 20:04.87 in the 5000m, 43:40 in the 10000m and was placed 6th in the 2k steeplechase in 8:38.65. In Gateshead he ran 43.18 in the 10k cross country for 35th in M60 grade and 43.45 in the 10000m for 27th on the track. In Brisbane while still in the M60 grade he ran 20:35.10 in the 5000m, 44:02.09 in the 10000m to finish 29th and was 38th in the 8km Cross Country in 36:47.

He also competed at the Oceania Masters Championships in Geelong, Australia in 2002 and returned with 3 medals in the M65 age group - bronze in the 1500m (5:39.34) and 5000m (20:41.71), silver in the 2km steeplechase (8:48.48) and a fourth placing in the 8km cross country. He also competed in the World Road Championships in Lytham, St Annes, England.

Thank you for the memories and times at the Yacht Club in Taupo with your friends and family. For more than a year Neil was still training and competing while quite unwell and at beginning of this year he was still out walking regularly. "He was persistent", Jan said. Our thoughts and sympathy go to Jan and her family, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

## LOST SHOTPUT

Have you seen my little Shotput?  
Shiny, Brass and 3 kgs.  
Last used at North Island Champs  
In November 2019 at Whakatane.

It's a favourite for many of us.  
To throw and to remember  
'Cos it used to belong to Colleena.  
And it still wants to do more.

I thought it would have rolled up at Nationals  
Ready to go in March.  
But alas, it was not there.  
I am sad and lonely without it  
And have totally lost my mojo!!  
I dearly wish it back, home, here with me.

**CAN YOU HELP? CAN YOU RECALL SEEING IT LYING SOMEWHERE?**

Please contact me if you do,  
**Jill, on 027 3287737 or email [jillandjb@xtra.co.nz](mailto:jillandjb@xtra.co.nz)**

**I WOULD BE SO THANKFUL.**

# Track, American Style

by John Campbell

There is a perception that the USA is the 'home' of Track & Field and with good reason. The sheer number of athletes competing in the sport from elementary school level, right up to the senior level, is impressive. In recent years, the domination of the USA in the shorter sprint events has been surpassed by their Jamaican counterparts.

For the last few years, I have lived in the midwest of the USA and of course have been keen to compete at masters level, since I was able to make a comeback from injury.

I thought I would share with you, my experiences of masters track in the United States.

It seems that pretty much every high school in the US has a track. These are not grass tracks, but are an all-weather surface of black rubber chip. I would guess that this type of surface is not only economical, but actually very durable and feels nice to run on. The only downside, is that the black surface tends to absorb the heat from the sun, which makes for some very hot training sessions, when the temperatures are upwards of 30C.



*Competing in Illinois on a typical high school all-weather track*

Some high schools with a larger budget, have opted for the red 'tartan' tracks, which are more expensive, but do provide a better running surface. Mondo surface tracks are generally reserved for colleges (universities) and larger football stadiums.

This abundance of tracks, essentially means that you do not have to travel very far to run on a good all-weather track. I had the luxury of having three good tracks, all within a 10 minute drive from home.

When I was living near Pukekohe in Auckland, I would have to travel approximately 45 kms to Mt Smart stadium or sometimes to the closer Papakura track, when it was available. So you can see that the proliferation of decent tracks throughout the US, makes the sport of athletics more accessible to the general public.

You may think that masters athletics would therefore be huge in the US, however I did find that the opposite was true. For some reason, the number of competing masters athletes in each state, seemed to be quite small compared to New Zealand. The USATF is a very large governing body over the sport and masters are part of that organisation (USATF Masters).

The national masters championships are usually a well organised event, with a greater number of total athletes competing – as you would expect from a population of around 330 million.

Similar to the situation in New Zealand, there are a number of different options available for masters, in terms of competitions to enter. There are events open to all age groups, which tend to range from junior high school to masters, USATF Masters sanctioned championships and the local Senior Olympics or State Games, which are held in each state every year.

Over the past few years, I was lucky enough to attend a mixture of different events and competed with the younger athletes as well as competing in my own age group at the masters level.

If you haven't attended an indoor track and field meet, then you are missing out on a unique experience. Most major universities will have an indoor complex, which typically houses a 200m oval track (most are flat - not banked tracks) along with long jump, high jump, pole vault and some throws (usually the super heavyweight and shot put). For obvious safety reasons, the discus, javelin and hammer throw are not held indoors.



*Getting in the blocks at the start of an indoor 200m at Trine University, in Angola, Indiana*

For a 200m sprinter, the flat oval track with narrower lanes and tighter turns, becomes a real challenge. Instead of one turn and a home straight, you have to negotiate a full lap with two turns and two short straights, which definitely impacts not only the normal pacing strategy, but also the the ability to run at top speed around the curves. As a consequence, the times tend to be slower than the equivalent outdoor performances.



*Panoramic view of the indoor track at Purdue University, Fort Wayne, Indiana*

Similarly with the 400m, this involves two laps around the track and this race differs even more from its outdoor counterpart, as the last lap is similar to the 800m, in that the last lap is not run in lanes. For those that are only used to competing outdoors, this is a major difference and it takes some getting used to.

In contrast, the indoor 60m is not affected by wind or other weather conditions and therefore are generally as fast, if not faster than non-wind assisted outdoor performances.

Speaking of wind-assisted sprints – while the major championship events in the US will have wind readings taken, most other competitions, whether masters level or senior/open grade, invariably will not. This was a constant frustration for me, as all records must include an wind gauge reading, in order for it to be ratified. A quick look at the Masters Rankings website, will confirm my statement, as there are numerous US based performances listed as NWI or ( ).

This may be because there is a different approach to electronic timing throughout the US. In new Zealand, the timing equipment is generally owned by the club or stadium facility and will more than likely be a permanent installation at the stadium. In the US however, most of the electronic timing systems are owned by independent operators that work as freelance timing services for local schools, universities and other event organisers. Some operators own a wind gauge, but it appears that most operators either don't own one or opt not to use it.

As a consequence, most athlete's times and rankings do not take into consideration the wind factor, until they reach senior level. For a country that is so obsessed with sports statistics and analysis, I find it quite odd.

Another thing that I took some adjustment, was the concept of the 'rolling schedule'. Again this was a frustration for me, as I was used to a timed programme and knowing exactly when my races would take place. Normally I will warm up prior to a race and have a reasonable period in which to recover before the race. With a rolling schedule, this becomes difficult to judge, as they will only publish a start time for the whole day, with each event following on directly after the previous one. It seems that I would invariably misjudge the approximate start time of my races, due to the fact that it was almost impossible to predict how long the previous event would take.

Unfortunately this concept seems to be almost universally accepted at most competitions, despite the ability to work out a reasonably accurate programme, based on entries from the previous year's meet. The upside however, is that the whole event overall does tend to finish earlier than an equivalent timed programme.

Even with these local differences, the track meets are still highly enjoyable and the same masters camaraderie as we have come to expect. From my experience, the athletes are very friendly and the officials are approachable and helpful.



*Making new friends at the Illinois Senior Olympics in 2018*

Some states have a greater masters presence than others. I found that Michigan has a relatively small group of active masters athletes and consequently I would have to travel to neighbouring states to compete, such as Indiana, Illinois or Wisconsin. With the brilliant interstate highway system throughout the USA, a road trip of several hours was actually quite pleasurable.

With the advent of the COVID pandemic, athletics was no less impacted than other sports. Even though outdoor activities are considered safer than indoor ones, most competitions this year were cancelled and instead, we saw the advent of the virtual challenge.

While some did take part in these informal events, I wanted to compete in a real competition and not a virtual one. As all of the local state competitions were cancelled, I looked for neighbouring state events and the only one that was still being held, was the Wisconsin Senior Olympics. The event was open to all masters athletes aged 40 years and over. Most of the other states restrict entry of these 'senior' competitions, to the 50+ age groups.

The 'new normal' as they call it, was anything but normal. All competitors, spectators, officials and organisers wore masks and there was a restriction on the number of people allowed inside the stadium at any one time. Spectators were not allowed in the competition area and were told that they could only be in the stands for the duration of the particular race or event that they were watching. In practice however, most of them just stayed there most of the day, but there was plenty of room to stay well apart from each other.

At the finish line, there were no handshakes - just 'elbow bumping' and then back to wearing your mask after the race. I ran with my mask tucked into my compression shorts, so that it was readily available after each race. Sprint races utilised only lanes 1, 3, 5 and 7 so that runners were spaced at least 2m apart. Starting blocks were sanitised between each race. Hand sanitiser and masks were provided to all entrants. Everyone had their temperature taken upon entry and were given a paper wristband to indicate that we had been checked and did not have a fever. We also had to sign a waiver, which of course was more comprehensive than the usual waiver.

Apart from that, it was a regular track and field meet for the athletes and it definitely felt a lot safer competing outside, than a trip to the supermarket.



One of my favourite local tracks at DeWitt High School, Michigan



Finishing 1st in the 400m at the recent Wisconsin Senior Olympics

Because the meet was held in one day, I ran four events (50m, 100m, 200m & 400m) and managed to pick up four gold medals and despite running into a strong headwind, I broke three Wisconsin state records in the process.

Since my comeback in 2018, I have broken state records in Michigan, Illinois and Wisconsin, as well as winning medals in both the USA and Canada, plus adding several NZ records, so I would regard my comeback as successful.

My modest beginning in masters athletics began in 2005, so this year marked my 15th year of competing. I have to admit that I am still learning new things and my training has evolved over the years. Having felt the pain of injuries and the struggle to regain even basic fitness, I now have the approach of keeping a constant level of fitness throughout the year. This means that I train every day, but without punishing my body with brutal workouts. I find that this new philosophy works well for me and I am now in the best shape of my life, partly thanks to the global pandemic, which meant having little to do except get outdoors and run.

Over the last few years, I have met many athletes in the US and some are now familiar faces to me.

Whenever I competed at a new meet, it seemed that people would go out of their way to make me feel welcome. I can't stress enough how friendly everyone has been towards me and this makes any event all the more enjoyable.

Due to the physical distance between cities and states, it may not feel as close-knit as the New Zealand masters scene, however that doesn't diminish the fun and friendly rivalry that masters athletics is renowned for worldwide.



Tight 'photo finish' of the 100m final (M55) at Toronto, Canada 2019



# Thrower Profile: Tania Hodges

by Laini Inivale

- NGATI HAUA, NGATI MANIAPOTO, NGATI PAHAUWERA, NGATI RANGINUI, AND NGATI TUWHARETOA

A lifetime of being active is nothing new to Tania Hodges (Ngati Haa, Ngati Maniapoto, Ngati Pahauwera, Ngati Ranginui, and Ngati Tuwharetoa) but how do you learn to actually throw when you're old(er)? A few years before the World Masters Games 2017 (WMG) came to Auckland, Tania took up masters athletics so she:

1. wouldn't embarrass herself;
2. could be competitive at the WMG.

Joining a proud club sporting a rich heritage, the Frankton Athletics Club, she immediately broke their W50 Shot put record and shortly thereafter the Waikato/Bay of Plenty Masters W50 Shot put record. I think I first met Tania during her embarrassing stage.

Her current national level Masters Athletics records are:

North Island masters records: W50 Throws Pentathlon 3195 points; W55 Weight Throw 12.29m.

New Zealand Masters Athletics records: Weight Throw W50 13.57m and W55 12.59m; W55 Throws Pentathlon 3130 points. NZMA Indoor: W50 Shotput 11.23m.

Every hero narrative needs a great villain. Prior to Tania appearing, one Tina Ryan (former NZ Senior Women's Discus Champion, coached by Les Mills) had been making waves in the W50 throwing grade. I'm not going to debate here the politics of who is the hero or villain but suffice to say, the constant swapping of records/titles between them, fuels a lifelong competitive throwing friendship.

Typifying Tania to a tee, the following incident on 8 December 2017 has gone down in masters throwing folklore. This was confided to her Frankton Athletics Club coach, accomplished all round thrower and technique guru Dave Couper. Setting the background, Tania was singularly focussed, training for the 2018 Oceania Masters Athletics Championships in Dunedin January 2018. That meet would be her last chance in the W50 grade, to break the 7.26kg Weight Throw Oceania record of 13.64m set in 2015 by Australian thrower Jayne Hardy.

Look coach thought I'd throw the weight throw at the bach. They were telling me go to the beach ... you'll hit the bach! I said no it will be alright ... Nek minute ... I said one last throw ... just missed my husband, smashed the table, bounced, smashed the window and landed on a tray of eggs! I'm so thankful it was just that ... no more throwing at the bach!!!

Yeah nah, don't mess with Tania. Dutifully incurring the cost of the bach table, window, eggs and trauma, there was no fairy tale ending this time. Winning gold and breaking the NZ record in front of her many fans, including me, Tania threw 13.57m, missing the Oceania record by 8 centimetres! Now in the W55 Grade, Tania's new challenge is the Oceania Weight Throw record of 12.73m set in 2019 again by Australia's Jayne Hardy. The next Oceania Masters Athletics Championships is scheduled for Norfolk Island in January 2022.

I'm unapologetically jealous of athletes who have the discipline to not only throw to a high standard, but run and jump as well. Tania being Tania takes this to a whole new level, representing New Zealand around the world in other sports and winning. Recognising her mahi, the NZ Herald 17/03/2018 showcased an aptly named good news story Weekend Warrior: Record breaker Tania Hodges leads by example. Tania has even broken a Masters Weightlifting World record. As alluring as her weightlifting records and mountain of medals are, forgive me for not knowing the exact details, just seeing the weightlifting onesie put me off exploring further.

Her effervescent personality directly affects my time, as she gathers Auckland-based strays from other sports who want to learn throwing. I train with them. Tania is a one woman master's athletics people magnet that we need to clone.

How did Tania do at the WMG 2017? Achieving both her starting goals, earning the Fern, she won W50 bronze with a 10.49m shot put. For now you can be sure that Tania has been busy training during COVID, for when competitions start again. In sharing the ups and downs of Tania's 5 year throwing mission, I hope your future has the privilege of intertwining your story with hers.

Having personally survived Tania's throwing antics, it's only proper that her husband has the last say with these moving tender thoughts:

*In her middle age ("masters..lol") now, for some reason she's decided to try and break every record under the sun for her age group in indoor rowing, CrossFit, weightlifting, and athletics. She is a successful property developer, and I leave all the responsibilities of negotiations with her. She's also attending reo wānanga (Māori language classes). Most of all, she is a wonderful, caring mother, partner and our whānau (family) is truly blessed to have her in our lives. Kris MacDonald, from 100 Maori Leaders.*

**Nga manaakitanga**

# Racing Smarts

by George White

Do you have them? If we are talking about racing strategy then yes everyone does. Training may be a case of putting one foot in front of the other but whether you are trying to win a race, your age group or just do a great time, a race is different - you need to be race smart.

Top athletes may only race a few times a year and their race strategy is therefore critical to their success. As somewhat lesser standard athletes and as masters we tend to race more frequently but that doesn't mean we shouldn't have a pre-evaluated strategy for all our races. Being fit is a start but it is not enough when it comes to racing and most importantly a flexible strategy is essential as we cannot control other athletes (at least not to any great extent). You may think that an athlete further down the field doesn't have a strategy - but not so, if you enter a race then you have one. A race is not a required outcome of training - it's a choice and if you make that choice you'll need a plan. Strategies for racing are very similar for runners and race walkers, except walkers have the added component of judging.

There are basically 3 types of race strategy:

- The simplest is - to finish the race;
- To record a fast time (or age group PR); or
- At the pointy end - to beat specific competitors or all competitors.

Whatever the strategy, you will run a little harder or a little further (or both) in a race compared to training. Strategies for racing beyond just finishing must acknowledge what a race is. A race should be a 100% effort. If you put in 100% the specific challenge of a race is not physiological - it's psychological.

Anyone can run themselves to exhaustion but multiple studies have shown that generally the best race times come from even paced running. Ideally you pick a pace that you're confident you can maintain and spread your 100% effort evenly over the entire race. You make in-race adjustments based upon feedback from your body and as the finish line comes into view, you use all the energy you have left to cross the line 100 percent spent. Sounds easy doesn't it but in reality it is not so. The adrenaline starts pumping, there is a mass of equally excited peers all around you and there is an instinctive urge just to go.

Try to maintain an even pace! This doesn't mean your effort will feel the same throughout the race. The first part will feel easy, the latter stages won't. But your effort should drain your resources at a consistent rate, resulting in a pace you can maintain. It is pretty unlikely that an elite Kenyan distance runner is reading this so forget vicious surges and covering every move of your opposition, however if you can do negative splits (the second half of the race faster than the first) then

this could be a competitive advantage. Learning to run more conservatively early on and finish significantly stronger is a really positive strategy.

Whatever your strategy - run tangents (the shortest distance possible) during the race. Hug curves. Don't zigzag when passing other runners and when preparing for an upcoming turn, remember that the shortest distance between two points is a straight line. Cutting corners on road turns can save metres which in a long race can really add up. Remember cutting corners is not cheating - that is how the course is measured. NOT cutting corners is cheating yourself.

Obviously in 100m and 200m events, pacing is not a factor. However, for the 400m at elite level, the event is almost uniformly run with the first 200m faster than the final 200m. In the 800m, fastest times are also almost always achieved with a positive-split strategy. The 1500m appears to be the cross over distance and in the 5000m and 10000m the optimal strategy certainly shifts to even-splitting although some really great times have been set with slightly negative splits.

If the opposition dictates something other than an even pace then consider the following:

- Accelerate forcefully at the start line to your expected pace, but don't sprint. If you change pace during the race, do it gradually. Sprints carry far too great an energy cost;
- Running just behind a competitor or on their shoulder (drafting) gives you two advantages. Physiologically, you save 2 - 5 seconds per kilometre and psychologically, someone else shoulders the stress of setting the pace;
- When passing a competitor, don't just ease by them; fly by them! Make them think you're running so well that there's no way they can stay with you. You'll crush their spirit and gain more advantage than just the distance you establish;
- Along with passing with authority - pass wide. Athletes frequently hang on when being passed but hanging on to someone on the other side of the road is hard to do and often they won't give chase;
- Refrain from kicking until you're certain you can maintain the effort to the finish line. If you run out of kick before the finish, you'll lose more time than you gained;
- Run your own race! -it's a cliché for a reason. Everyone in the race brings their own fitness, talent, and race strategy. It might work for them but not necessarily for you;
- In a tight race it's important to know how your competitors are doing, but you don't want to look back as they may see this as a sign that you're tired. Instead, just turn slightly to catch a quick glance behind as you round corners;

- If you sense that another runner is about to make a move - instead of waiting for it - go yourself. Stealing your competitor's move puts you in control and may confuse them. Surge away and make them respond. You'll find it often takes the impetus away from them and they become followers rather than attackers;
- Traditionally, people slow down as they take turns. Capitalize on this by surging into, through and out of every corner. On a tight turn if you are leading a competitor who may be closing, when you pass coming the other way make sure you look confident and as soon as you cross - put in a burst of speed that cannot be seen and you will pull ahead without them realising it. If you are behind at a turn - as your opposition approaches, try to look a little ragged (without actually losing form!) so that you are not considered a threat. Then once passed, pick-up the pace and gain ground while you can't be seen;
- A common strategy is to surge over the top of a hill while your rivals relax and slow but it's also a great idea to surge at the bottom of hills. Many runners relax at the bottom of hills as they return to a flat running pace and rhythm. Smart racers, however, take advantage of this by carrying the downhill momentum onto the flat;
- For race walkers - generally don't surge past other walkers as you pass judges. This is not the time to attract attention, but if you do - make sure the other competitor is between you and the judge. You are not trying to hide, just making sure the judge concentrates on your competition.

Remember the real work is completed before you toe the start line - the race is largely mind over matter.

# Osteitis Pubis

by Margaret Saunders

Osteitis pubis is tissue damage and inflammation at the pubic symphysis (where the right and left pubic bones join) which then results in groin pain in the lower pelvic region. It is generally an overuse injury where groin pain develops gradually over time. There will be pain when firmly touching the pubic bone at the front of the pelvis and frequently abduction will cause discomfort. The athlete may previously have suffered a hernia in the similar area. The more the athlete continues to train, the longer the injury will take to heal.

Several muscles such as the adductors and the abdominals attach near the pubic symphysis. As these muscles contract they exert a force on the pubic symphysis. Repetitive activities such as running, kicking, changing directions or even repetitive sit ups can cause this overuse injury.

Initially the area may ache and this may persist when the activity has finished. When warmed up, the pain may lessen. However, as the condition worsens, the athlete may be unable to complete the training session.

There are many possible causes of this injury. Some of these are poor biomechanics, muscle weakness, muscle tightness, fatigue, incorrect technical model, increase in training frequency or intensity or change in training surface.

The following tests may be used to eliminate some possible reasons for the pain or may assist with diagnosis and severity of the injury - Xray, bone scan, and MRI.

Initially, resting from exercises which cause pain is essential to allow the inflammation to heal. If the athlete continues to train or compete with pain, the injury will take longer to heal. Massage of surrounding muscles may alleviate soreness if muscle tightness is one possible cause. Correction of biomechanical issues may be vital, and orthotics may be considered for the athlete if foot biomechanics are an issue.

Anti inflammatory medication may alleviate some of the symptoms.

Once the pain has diminished, a gradual return to exercise may be started. However, if symptoms or pain return, then more rest is required. A return to fitness may be aided by swimming or cycling if there is no pain when doing those activities.

Before commencing hard training or competition a plan must be created. The rehabilitation program may include some, or all of, the following - flexibility, core stability, strength and conditioning exercises. This program should be established and monitored by a health professional. Exercises to stabilise the pelvic area may be given to avoid future injuries. An adductor stretch may be part of the rehabilitation. Muscles around the pubic symphysis may require strengthening. Biomechanics may be assessed.

# Practising What I Preach?

by Ian Carter

While others may have used their lock-down to organise photos, sheds and junk cupboards, I have taken this chance to formalise my thoughts on one of life's big questions: does being a coach make me a better athlete, and vice versa?

Firstly, a little history. For 30 years I have been a middle-distance master's athlete. I like to think of myself as a successful one because I'm still going and I'm striving to keep my age-graded percentages in the same territory. Using age-graded percentages helps me to rationalise my rapidly deteriorating times.

My coaching history covers a similar time span. I was already involved with the local Dannevirke Athletic Club when our elder daughter started high school, and entered the hurdles for the school sports and wanted me to teach her how to do them.

I have never really stopped since. I have coached high school athletes across all events and Run Jump Throw at primary schools. Ironically, I have only ever coached a couple of middle-distance athletes.

I have also coached Special Olympics (SO) and para athletes over the years and continue to do so. I have received a lot of satisfaction with the occasional frustration in these athletes' performances. The greatest satisfaction has been working with SO athletes where even the smallest achievement can be and is celebrated.

Herein lies the first way in which being a coach has made me a better athlete.

- **Don't ever take anything for granted**, and always be humble and grateful for any achievement at whatever level.

Some other tenets that I follow, both as a coach and an athlete.

- **Don't train like a pro unless you are one.**  
The pros spend more time looking for the ultimate 2-3% than they spend on their base. The time we amateurs have available is probably insufficient to get a proper base, let alone allow any for that ultimate 2-3%.
- **Rest is best.**  
While we must stress our body to improve, if we don't allow for recovery we will soon be broken. This applies in both a macro and micro sense.

- As a master's athlete, I tend to have 2-3 years more intense activity during the early part of a new 5-year age group than a couple of years just ticking over before rebounding refreshed in the next age group. These days, I train only three times a week and only one of these is what I would class as an effort session. My high school athletes often have two or three other sports, so I generally have only a couple of sessions per week in season and probably don't see them for four months over the winter. All athletes should have at least one day a week away from any training.
- At a micro level, you need an adequate recovery also. When doing rep sessions, the time of the recovery phase is as important as the effort phase. Flying 30m pure speed reps need 5 minutes of recovery between each.

- **To run fast, you must train fast.**  
Over the years several harriers have asked me about getting faster. My standard response is to race on the track over the summer. Their response is usually that they don't like running on the track. Improvement generally involves doing things you would not normally do or necessarily enjoy.
- **Stretching must be balanced with strengthening.**  
For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. Without strengthening the opposing muscles, you will not be able to take advantage of the increased stretch of a muscle. Static stretching, by definition, has no place in a warm-up; anything static is not going to warm you up and there's even some evidence that it can contribute to injury.
- **Everyone is different.**  
Physically, mentally and the situation she/he lives or lived in, determines what and how any training any athlete should do and what a coach should prescribe. While there is a generally accepted template for training schedules, when one looks at what elite athletes do there is considerable variation. Even with the technical form, whether running, jumping or throwing, there is considerable variation from the supposed perfect form. I attended a coaching seminar with an elite US sprints coach who considered a +/- 10% variation from the considered ideal form to be acceptable.

● **Goal setting.**

While it is necessary for continual motivation, it is dangerous to set winning as a goal. At some stage you are bound to fail, and it may be through no fault of yours but just that the other person is better on the day. The beauty of athletics as an individual, objectively measured sport is that everyone can be a winner. Even on the days that things do not go to plan, if you can walk away honestly saying that you gave it your best effort, then you should be satisfied.

None of this is original thought but rather some ideas that I have picked up over the years from various sources and found that they have worked for me, both as an athlete and coach. These days my two most frequently used references are:

- *scienceofunning.com* which has a lot of good information mostly on middle-distance and distance running; and
- a 750-page tome called *The Sprinters' Compendium*. The most interesting aspect of this book is the very wide range of views of a group of elite coaches when commenting at the end of each chapter. An extreme example of the alternative views presented is in the chapter on weight training: *"I believe lifting weights to improve speed is analogous to America's foreign policy, perpetual war to promote peace, love and understanding. How did the weight room ever become a centrepiece for sprint training?"* Tony Holler, an Illinois high school Hall of Fame coach. (By the way, he has recently had an interview on the *scienceofunning* podcast.)

And a shout-out to Mike Weddell. The first piece I read in this magazine is his "Coaching Corner". I invariably agree with his thinking and he always presents it very succinctly.

Some of my more satisfying athlete-coach relationships have happened when I have begun working in a discipline in which I have known little more technically than the athlete. I always emphasise that we are in this together, that there will be missteps and detours, and that we'll both take responsibility for the failures and the athlete ultimately gets the glory. The area in which I have the biggest input, whatever the discipline, is the mental: planning, focussing on the task at hand and handling the pressure of competition.

So back to the question at the beginning: does being a coach make me a better athlete, and vice versa?

It's knowing that mental aspect as an athlete that makes me a better coach. Also, I know how it feels when a performance doesn't go as well as I hoped, and I'm sure that makes me handle the situation with the athlete more appropriately than in some other instances I've witnessed.

Being an experienced athlete, and still going when I'm so old in their young eyes, gives me more credence with those I'm coaching. They know that I know.

Coaching makes me practice what I preach in my own training. I make myself have rest days and even now that I have the time, I don't do "junk miles". I try to remember that the goals are not just the absolute performances. Working with SO and para athletes has required me to be adaptable when coaching, and I try to be similarly adaptable with myself. While working with an elite sprinter over the past couple of years, I researched that discipline intensely and have even adopted some of those principles.

The only difference between the two aspects is that while my coaching is undoubtedly improving, it's a continual struggle to feel the same about my running!



L to R: 10km (40min and under) race, Scottish runners Tom Sawyer, Peter Stevens, Simon Keller, Andrew Wharton, with Alasdair Saunders leading



Bev Hodge 3rd W60 5km in the Wellington Road Championship

PHOTOS: Sharon Wray

# The National COVID Cross Country Challenge 2020

by Graeme Lear

The downgrading of this year's NZ Cross Country champs to a "challenge" was disappointing but had to be done to be fair to the hemmed in Aucklanders. Some competitors from other parts of the country also decided to stay at home, which meant relatively small race fields. However, as the man with the microphone said at the start of the day, this was still going to be the best competition anyone was going to get on a cross country course in 2020!

The event was hosted by Athletics Otago at Chisholm Links golf course near St Clair beach in Dunedin. As the event was taking place under Level 2 rules, there was some apprehension about how it would all work on the day. The Athletics NZ website had an anxiety provoking description of the restrictions involved, and to give credit to the organisers it all went exactly as outlined, including having to wait in the car park until exactly 9.30am to gain access to the venue (1hr before the start of my race). Spectators went in through a separate entrance, and a one-way system led us to the warm up area. Extra gear had to be packed in large plastic bags to be transported 200m from the start to the finish – hopefully everyone is now using these as bin-liners as I would hate to think of them as single use plastic. The course itself was out of bounds until 15min before the race start when we gathered on the start line.

The most obvious departure from normal was the lack of variety in singlet colours. The blue and yellow of Otago and red of Canterbury dominated proceedings all day, and most others were also from the South Island. In the masters' grades there were only occasional North Islanders, and those mostly in the older age groups. If you weren't from Canterbury or Otago you got a clear start from the front of a lane!

Those who weren't able to make it to the event missed running a great course. This was certainly not the traditional flat and fast golf course race. Otago had tried it out for their Centre Champs three weeks previously and managed to find an amazing number of undulations and two substantial hill climbs in a 2km lap. It was spectator-friendly too, with a short jog between vantage points. Conditions underfoot were excellent, with only one slippery bit on a steep downhill which was avoidable next time round.

No food or drink was available at the venue, and an additional and somewhat weird aspect of the COVID response was a rule that spitting and nose-blowing was prohibited while racing. I wasn't sure how this was going to be policed, but it must have been, as a former Olympian was disqualified from the second master's men's race for inappropriate expectoration.

Rumours of this circulated immediately after the race and were ultimately confirmed by his absence from the results list and an article on the back page of the newspaper!

In spite of the relatively low turnout there was fierce competition in almost all of the masters' grades. The closest finish was in the M60-64 with only 3s separating the two Cantabrians. Performances were recognised as usual with medals for the first three in each 5 year age group.

Although circumstances were unusual it turned out to be a great day – the weather was good and the event was well organised and ran to time. Physical distancing didn't stop old friends catching up, although there were fewer hugs and more elbow bumps this time. Hopefully it will all be back to normal next year!

## Masters Age Group Medallists

### Men 8k

#### M35

1	Ben Wreford	29:30
2	Iain Macdonald	29:40
3	Glen Chisholm	29:41

#### M40

1	Dwight Grieve	29:08
2	Kelvin Meade	29:28
3	Allan Staite	30:45

#### M45

1	David Fitch	29:59
2	Blair Martin	30:06
3	Andrew Lonie	30:52

#### M50

1	Robert Howell	31:48
2	Jason Baillie	32:32
3	John Marshall	32:35

#### M55

1	Richard Bennett	31:00
2	Peter Stevens	31:43
3	Graeme Butcher	34:08

#### M60

1	John Gamblin	33:20
2	Peter Richards	33:23
3	Geoff Anderson	34:22

### Men 6k

#### M65

1	Graeme Lear	26:13
2	Phil Napper	27:08
3	Philip Morris	29:51



Don Stevens M50 10km at the Wellington Road Championship

<b>M70</b>			<b>W45</b>		
1	Graeme Adams	29:47	1	Shireen Crumpton	26:09
2	Fred Needham	30:33	2	Julie Edmunds	26:46
3	Tony Dawbin	32:40	3	Georgina Pakeho	29:09
<b>M75</b>			<b>W50</b>		
1	Alan Jones	35:40	1	Christine Montgomery	28:38
2	Robin Reed	36:20	2	Sue Cuthbert	29:54
3	Evan MacIntosh	38:16	<b>W55</b>		
<b>Women 6k</b>			1	Gail Sharp	34:14
<b>W35</b>			<b>W60</b>		
1	Kristy Eyles	25:56	1	Deborah Telfer	28:59
2	Amanda Waldron	26:41	2	Karen Gillum-Green	33:37
3	Michelle Watt	29:35	3	Claire Giles	36:01
<b>W40</b>			<b>W70</b>		
1	Jo Ramsay	26:45	1	Margaret Flanagan	33:48
2	Amy de Wit	29:59	2	Barbara Patrick	34:29
3	Lee Grieve	41:56	3	Shirley Rolston	43:07
			<b>W75</b>		
			1	Myrtle Rough	39:49

# Auckland

by Murray Free

As soon as COVID restrictions eased Athletics Auckland sprang into action and the winter cross country season commenced in June. The programme was compressed with several races running on consecutive weekends. The first event was held at Barry Curtis Park, Flatbush. This park is spectator friendly with much of the 2km course visible from a central location. The race attracted 16 masters women and 44 masters men who had been hanging out for some competition whilst being restricted to hopefully training around their local neighbourhood.

The following week picturesque Long Bay on the North Shore was the venue. The course is set around the grassed picnic area above the beach with views of the Hauraki Gulf and iconic Rangitoto Island. An undulating firm course under the pohutukawa trees made for fast times and good photos. The Long Bay event is usually the lead-in to the North Island Cross Country Champs which unfortunately did not go ahead this year. The race distances were kept at 2, 4 & 6km so runners had a good speed session.

Next was the purist's cross country course set at Pukekohe A & P Showgrounds and the neighbouring farm. No Sky Tower in sight but plenty of obstacles on the race line with the stock only recently moved from the course. Two hill climbs on each lap made for some tactical options. The grass was long but the ground firm and a most enjoyable day in a rural setting.

Cross country 4 at Lloyd Elsmore Park, Pakuranga also doubled as the Auckland Teams Champs. The event was well supported and athletes from Waikato and Northland made the trip to Auckland each week seeking some good racing.

The Auckland Cross Country Champs took place on 8 August and saw a return to Barry Curtis Park. Masters age group winners were: Kylie Brown (W35) Wesley; Catherine Delaporte (W40) Glen Eden; Nicola Collinge (W45) Oratia; Julie Mercer (W50) Glen Eden; Carolyn Smith (W55) Takapuna; Margie Peat (W60+) ACA; Tim Hitchcock (M35) Wesley; Simon Mace (M40) Owairaka; Nick Moore (M45) Owairaka; Wim Luijpers (M50) North Harbour Bays; Andrew Pirie (M55) ACA; Brett Laurent (M60) ACA; Malcolm Chamberlin (M65+) ACA.

Long distance athletes in Auckland have had plenty on the calendar this winter. Still coming this season are the Auckland Road Champs followed by New Zealand Road Champs on 7 November at Bruce Pulman Park, Papakura.

The NZMA indoor champs were due to be held at the Millennium Sports Hall but an Auckland move back to COVID Level 3 unfortunately put the kybosh on these at the last minute.



*Catherine Delaporte, Glen Eden (738) and Ai Osugi, Bays (740) both W40 at the Long Bay XC - 27 June 2020*



*Jacqueline Kemp, Takapuna (743) W50 and Natasha Wade, Oratia (741) W45 at the Long Bay XC - 27 June 2020*

PHOTOS: Alisha Lovrich



# Waikato/Bay of Plenty

by Murray Clarkson



PHOTO: Sharon Wray

*The start of the 10km 40min+ at the Wellington Road Championship*

We have all faced the effects of the Pandemic which is on-going and has prevented many events from taking place. Fortunately, our region has been able to hold its cross country and road championships all-be-it with some restrictions. Our master's cross country day was cancelled due to venue problems.

The Waikato / Bay of Plenty Cross Country Championships were held at Waipuna Park in Tauranga under level one thus avoiding the numbers problem. Some excellent results with close finishes in the younger age groups - they are available on the WBOP Athletics website. Twenty seven masters aged athletes took part but only three of these were NZMA registered - a reflection of the ANZ attitude to the NZMA constitution.

The W/BoP Road Championships were held at St Peters College under Level 2 conditions. This was well thought out and complied with all the criteria. Access to the course was limited to competitors only who had to leave the course immediately after competing. No medal ceremonies took place.

There were two races, one with 45 juniors and the other of 74 runners. Of the 36 masters aged athletes only one was registered with NZMA.

Our Annual General Meeting was held on 30 August in Cambridge with 18 members present. These were the "old Guard" loyal members. Our President stood down and did not

seek re-election due to work commitments and a new President was not found. It was agreed that every endeavour be made to recruit a younger person to the position with the help of NZMA.

Our President reported 58 financial members with 23 being NZMA only members. Five master's specific meetings were held during the year either free or for a small charge to cover trophy engraving and venue costs. The W/BoP Masters Centre managed a modest financial surplus for the year. He pointed out that something needs to be done regarding the allowing of non-compliant athletes competing as Masters Athletes at events without complying with NZMA rules.

We have made our bookings for our summer events and look to give masters athletes a meaningful presence in the Waikato-Bay of Plenty region. All visitors are welcome.

The WBOP Athletics Centre has moved to a Board structure and we are represented on the management committee. We therefore are able to be incorporated as a voice on decision-making.

**Obituaries:** - We acknowledge the passing of the following long-standing members -

Eric de Lautour, Neil Fleming, Bruce McPhail, Laurie Fitzgerald. May they rest in peace.

# Taranaki

by Vicky Jones

Well, hasn't 2020 been turned on its head or what? It's meant the cancellation, postponement or adaptation of our region's events, like for all corners of the country and the world. As a group pinpointed as one of the most at risk, we master athletes have put great focus on keeping with training, keeping fit and well and chomping at the bit for the time when we can line up for competition.

For us in Taranaki the annual Anzac Day Relay in Whanganui became a virtual challenge where we each did our own 2km course. The same happened at level 2 for the Peter Cattley Memorial where different clubs used their own course with groups of no more than 10. It was interesting seeing the times in relation to the different courses. This year the race distance for the Peter Cattley were altered from 4km to 3km. Boy, was it a cold day! Most did theirs later in the day when conditions were more pleasant, but Alan Jones and myself did our 3km course at 7.15am in heavy frost, as I was unable to do it any later due to work commitments. This was followed by the first proper event in Stratford with the Tom Verney Memorial.

Then came the Taranaki Cross Country Championships at the Fitzroy Golf club at level 1 (Hallelujah!) to unseasonably warm conditions with the Tasman Sea and the Coastal Walkway providing an idyllic backdrop. Turnout was very good and all found the constant undulations a challenge with the ultimate being just before the start/finish line leading from the sea up to the club room - a short but gnarly steep beast which affected everyone. Thankfully the reward of reaching the top was a great downhill run down to the finish.

The walkers kicked off proceedings with a disappointing field of only 3 competitors - myself, Rodney Gillum and Albie Jane, which meant that we were all winners of our grades. Rodney and Albie started off close together with myself a short distance behind, which I knew wouldn't be maintained. With a 4km race distance over a 2km circumnavigation of the golf course, it meant tackling the dreaded last hill twice (3 times for the M65+ and MW competitors, 4 times for the M35-64 - poor blighters!) Albie pulled away just after the first lap with Rodney unable to go with him, and a widening gap to me in third. However, as I made my ascent up to the club rooms I could see I was gaining on Rodney which gave me a boost to see how close I could get to him, which I did a bit but not close enough to be a threat.

In the MW and M65+ race Karen Gillum-Green fronted up for her first race in quite some time, as did Vicky Adams who has had a constant battle with injury, so she was just happy to finish. The field of women was very heartening with an

honourable mention to Andrea Rowe, who fronted up for her first ever race (let alone championships) and claimed the W45 title.

In the M65+ races Murray Laird had a strong run claiming honours in the M65 grade while Des Phillips and Alan Jones continued to challenge each other. Coming up the big hill the final time they were neck and neck when Alan through down the proverbial gauntlet by powering down the other side toward the finish which was immediately taken up by Des, and as I liked to say at the time - it was on like Donkey Kong! With Des's sprint experience, he triumphed even though he just about tripped himself up preparing to do an extra lap instead of blitzing down the finishing shoot. The whole event was made sweeter for being able to gather in large numbers and partake in a glorious afternoon tea.

Then there was another blow when community transmission of that dreaded virus in Auckland threw everyone up in the air once more, threatening the NZ Cross Country Championships in Dunedin. Those who had entered locally awaited news anxiously as to whether or not it was going to happen as transport and accommodation had all been settled. Thankfully, it could, and we athletes feel for those athletes in Auckland who couldn't attend. Even though the status of the champs was altered to a challenge (right and proper in my view), those who entered competed like it was a fully fledged championship.

Taranaki masters acquitted themselves very well with Karen Gillum-Green (still overcoming an injury) earning silver in the W60 grade (and had a good mention in the live stream commentary!), while Alan Jones was victorious in the M75 grade, with Des Phillips coming in fourth in the M70 grade. There was some trepidation that the weather conditions would add to the cross country experience - blizzard! (or at least, icy and miserable which it had been a couple of days beforehand). Thankfully from what was captured on the live stream conditions were fair and sunny.

I asked how the course compared to the local course we had used for our regional champs and was told the Chisholm Links course was tougher, which is saying something considering the Fitzroy course was tough with its unrelenting undulations. Although it did provide good preparation for Dunedin.

Thankfully, the week before the Dunedin event, we were able to proceed with the other winter championship, the Taranaki Road Champs which were held on the cycle track adjacent to Bell Block velodrome. This year's hosts were the Taranaki Race Walking Club. They set up a 1km there-and-back loop to cater for the different distances being raced by various age groups.

The walkers kicked things off along with the youngsters who did 2km, while 'B' grade and 65+ walkers did 5km and the 'A' graders racing 10km. The surface is brilliantly smooth but for some reason it hammers the legs. We were anticipating having to contend with a strong icy wind which marred the beautifully sunny day, but by the time proceedings got underway the wind had dropped, and I regretted the purple thermal I had on from the very start.

All walkers passed muster with the judges with a handful of paddles handed out which had the intended effect of refocusing and straightening up. As the laps ticked over the camber coming back up the hill became more of an issue, as myself and Serena Coombes suffered hamstring issues but managed to finish in

respectable times. Albie Jane and Joy Bake felt a 5km walk wasn't long enough so they lined up for the 5km run which was raced by the MW and M65+. Karen gave the race the go-by, instead acting as cheerleader and photographer.

Vicky Adams, with her injuries, and Lynne Mackay were both just happy to finish. Des Phillips and Alan Jones continued to egg each other on, staying close together most of the way. With a lap and a half to go, Alan took off his shoes and finished in socks and balanced things out with Des with a strong finish, crossing 11s ahead. Being in different grades however meant they were both victorious - but it always good to have someone you can egg on!

## Results

### TET Athletics Taranaki Cross Country Champs - 19/07/2020 - Fitzroy Golf Course, New Plymouth

#### 4km Walk

W40	Vicky Jones	30.32.00 (1)
M55	Rodney Gillum	29.41.00 (1)
M65	Albie Jane	26.57.00 (1)

#### 8km Run

M35	Michael Erb	30.22.00 (1)
	Troy Gibson	39.27.00 (2)
M40	Mike O'Sullivan	30.32.00 (1)
	Oli Vincent	31.59.00 (2)
M50	Stephen Foreman	36.16.00 (1)
	Dave Hadley	37.03.00 (2)
M55	Richard Brewer	33.19.00 (1)
	Murray Hodson	37.28.00 (2)
	Chris Jones	44.31.00 (3)
M60	Robyn Grant	32.43.00 (1)

#### 6km Run

W35	Tracey Haldane	36.08.00 (1)
	Tracy O'Sullivan	41.13.00 (2)
W45	Andrea Rowe	39.53.00 (1)
W50	Karen Lawson	29.03.00 (1)
W55	Cheryl Leuthart	29.41.00 (1)
	Stella Bond	38.38.00 (2)
W60	Karen Gillum-Green	33.14.00 (1)
W65	Joy Baker	37.14.00 (1)
	Vicky Adams	39.04.00 (2)
	Lynne Mackay	41.03.00 (3)
M65	Murray Laird	29.23.00 (1)
	Albie Jane	33.53.00 (2)
M70	Des Phillips	34.17.00 (1)
M75	Alan Jones	35.18.00 (1)

### TET Athletics Taranaki Road Champs - 16/08/2020 - Taranaki Cycle Park, Bell Block

#### 10km A Grade Walk

W40	Vicky Jones	1.16.47 (1)
W50	Serena Coombes	1.05.05 (1)
M65	Peter Fox	1.00.30 (1)
	Tony Burrell	1.11.59 (2)

#### 65+ and B Grade 5km Walk

W65	Marlene White	41.52.00 (1)
	Joy Baker	44.49.00 (B2)
W75	Sue Park	42.29.00 (1)
M65	Albie Jane	34.07.00 (B1)
	Roger Mackay	37.28.00 (B2)
M70	Dave Barrett	37.38.00 (1)

#### 10km Run

M35	Michael Erb	36.30.00 (1)
	Troy Gibson	45.11.00 (2)
M40	Mike O'Sullivan	36.33.00 (1)
	Ben Gillum	37.37.00 (2)
M50	Stephen Foreman	41.49.00 (1)
	Dave Hadley	41.56.00 (2)
M55	Richard Brewer	40.45.00 (1)
	Chris Jones	50.05.00 (2)

#### 5km Run

W35	Tracey Haldane	21.27.00 (1)
	Tracy O'Sullivan	32.07.00 (2)
W50	Karen Lawson	21.17.00 (1)
W55	Cheryl Leuthart	21.10.00 (1)
	Stella Bond	29.49.00 (2)
W65	Joy Baker	26.58.00 (1)
	Vicky Adams	27.59.00 (2)
	Lynne Mackay	30.04.00 (3)
M65	Murray Laird	21.47.00 (1)
	Albie Jane	25.26.00 (2)
M70	Des Phillips	27.01.00 (1)
M75	Alan Jones	26.50.00 (1)

With all the uncertainty still casting clouds on events far and wide, there is optimism in Taranaki that the summer season will be all we can hope for with little interruption. The best we can do however, is to keep fit and well, and enjoy our training.

# Tasman

by Derek Shaw

## Cross Country Championships

There was a good turnout for the combined Tasman Centre and Athletics Nelson's cross country champs in warm, sunny and firm underfoot conditions at Rabbit Island on 15 August 2020. Masters runners could choose whether they ran 3 laps (6km) or 4 laps (8km).

First overall in the 3 lapper was W35 Kathy Dunbar with a time of 22:30. The first MM in the 3 lap race was Murray Hart (M60) in 23:40, just 1s ahead of the Graeme Lear (M65). David Mangnall (M55) was the third MM overall with 24:38. Second and third in the M60s were Andrew Barker (25:15) and Bill Revell (25:53). Second and third in the M55s were Don Wardle (25:46) and Rick Miller (27:04), while Ted van Geldermalsen (25:58) and Derek Shaw (26:15) were second and third in the M65s. Barry Dewar (26:55) was first in M70s, followed by John Smart (30:53). Christine Lear (31:12) was first in the W55s followed by Kim Woollett (32:03) and Adrienne Wylde (39:11). Karen Griffiths (33:39) was first in the W60s followed by Pam Barker (42:03). Oddette Llewellyn (31.20) was first in the W65s followed by Eileen Beattie (34:01) and Linda Sillery (40:32). Third MW overall and first W70 was Fran Kerse (31:51).

In the 4 lapper David Dunbar (M40) was first overall in 27:56, followed by Curtis Moore (M35) in 29:54 and Tim Cross (M60) in 32:45. Dominic Cain-Townley (33:08) and Andy Riley (34:25) were 2nd and 3rd in the M40s. Pete Marshall (37:38) and Jon Linyard (37:57) took the first two places in the M50s. The walkers did 3 laps and Daryl Nish (M45) was 1st overall in 38:48, followed by Alan West (M70) in 39:54 and Gwen Connor (W50) in 44:33.

## NZ Cross Country Challenge

Half a dozen Tasman Masters were planning on a road trip to Dunedin to contest the NZ Cross Country Champs in Dunedin on 29 August 2020, however when the status changed to a 'Challenge', due to Auckland athletes not being able to take part, most decided to stay home. The exception was Graeme Lear who continued with his plans to take part in the event. He lead the M65 grade from the start and was closely tracked by local runner Phil Napper for the first 2 laps before getting clear on the last lap and claiming first place in the 6km event in a time of 26:13 some 55s ahead of Phil with fellow Otago runner Phillip Morris claiming 3rd in 29:51. Graeme's account of this event can be read elsewhere in this issue.

## Road Championships

The Centre and Athletics Nelson road champs were held in conjunction with the Swan Trophy 10k on an out and back course in the Maitai Valley. Added interest was provided by utilising an age graded percentage system that resulted in the oldest runner starting first and down to the 40-year-old

runners starting last. There were separate count downs for men and women. The results were also converted to age graded percentages.

Topping the age graded percentages was 68-year-old Yvonne West with 90% after running 50:15. Second was Tim Cross (61) with 85% for his 40:34, followed by Paula Canning (48) 83% 40:56, Alister Dickson (72) 81% 48:26, Eddie Hohepa (50) 81% 37:49, Dave Riddell (67) 79% 46:39, Collette Read (49) 79% 43:26, David Francis (52) 78% 40:03, John Smart (73) 75% 52:48, and Phil Barnes (65) 75% 48:20 to round out the top 10 masters.

In the 10k walk Alan West was first in 72.00, followed by Daryl Nish 72:01, Elaine Llewellyn 81:11 and John Llewellyn 81:53. There was also a 5k option which several used as a 'try to impress the selectors' opportunity to press for places in the O60 teams for the NZ Road Relay champs. First was Nick Lovell (M55) in 20:07, followed by Derek Shaw (M65) 20:58, Bill Revell 21:09 and Barry Dewar (M70) 22:49.

## NZ Road Relay Championships

Once the green light was pushed for the 2020 NZ Road Relay champs in Feilding, there was a flurry of activity to finalise two O60 teams along with travel and accommodation. The Athletics Nelson O60 A team was close to full strength following the unavailability of 3 top runners in 2019 when they were beaten by Auckland University by 25s. With nine teams in the grade it looked like Auckland Uni and Christchurch Avon who had finished 3rd in 2019 would provide the strongest competition.

Transport issues provided some unexpected challenges even before the 6 lap race started. The ferry that was transporting Mike Morrissey to Wellington on the Friday was running two hours late which resulted in his ride to Palmerston North no longer being available when the ferry finally berthed. He was unable to hire a rental car in central Wellington and after taking a taxi out the airport he managed to get a rental from the last place open a few minutes before they closed. He finally arrived in Palmerston North around midnight.

About half way out to Feilding on the Saturday morning the B team's rental vehicle, which also contained the A teams first lap runner, had a massive electrical short and came to a sudden halt with the driver just managing to get it to the side of the road. The A team's vehicle was then used to shuttle most of the B team to the start and then to go back to the accommodation in Palmerston North to get the car Mike had rented. In the meantime thanks to the kind assistance and sportsmanship of several other O60 teams, the first four lap runners in both teams managed to secure rides to the start of their laps in time to take part in the race. Our thanks are extended to Wellington Scottish, Auckland University, Christchurch Avon and the other teams for their willingness to help us out.

The O60 race itself was the closest and most exciting of the eight we have participated in since the grade started in 2012 (we missed the 2016 race). The lead changed on every lap and even twice on the 5th lap. Andrew Barker gave the A team a great start with a 1:26 lead by the end of first lap over Wellington Harriers Paul May and a further 23s back to Christchurch Avon's Rodger Ward and another 13 and 14s back to Wellington Scottish's Chris Harp and Auckland University's Brett Katterns. Murray Hart maintained Nelson's lead for most of the second lap but was caught by Avon's in-form John Gamblin near the end. Derek Shaw quickly regained the lead and had a 40s margin by the end of the third lap over Auckland's Steve Duxfield who was closely followed by Wellington Harriers Brian Hayes and Avon's Dave Tyrrell – with just 11s separating the 3 chasing teams. Avon's Peter Richards made up the deficit and put his team back in front and had a 60s lead on Graeme Lear by the end of the 4th lap, with Auckland's Tony King a further 2:37 back and only 13s ahead of Scottish's Michael Cummins. Tim Cross regained the lead for Nelson on lap5 only to be outprinted by Avon's Andrew Stark who handed his team mate Victor Gamperie a 10s lead over Ian Carter. Despite only recently getting over a calf injury, Ian steadily hauled in Victor and eased away to win by 54s.

The win gave the club its 7th O60 title in the 9 years since the grades inception. The team time of 2:40:18 was 2:46 faster than their 2019 time. The fastest laps were shared around the top three teams with two each, with Andrew Barker and Tim Cross claiming them on laps 1 and 5. Christchurch Avon's John Gamblin and Peter Richards took the fastest laps on 2 and 4 while Auckland University's Steve Duxfield and Steve Fairley claimed laps 3 and 6.

The Athletics Nelson B team of Stu Hague, Mike Morrissey, Clive Holyoake, Bill Revell, Barry Dewar and Herman van Gessel put in a strong team effort to finish in 6th place amongst the nine teams with a total time of 2:56:01. They finished ahead of Olympic from Wellington and both the B teams of Wellington Harriers and Scottish.



The gold medal winning M60+ Athletics Nelson team, from L to R: Murray Hart, Ian Carter, Graeme Lear, Tim Cross, Andrew Barker and Derek Shaw.

PHOTO: courtesy of Derek Shaw

# Wellington

by Michael Wray

It's been a while since the last report, because, well, COVID. We lost the last few events of our 2019/20 track season and this included our 5000m run and walk championships, which had been scheduled for the last track meet of the season. As we entered the 2020 harrier season, we knew some events would not be able to re-scheduled. The Shaw Baton Relay, which is our traditional season opener, was the first casualty. This event is run on a farm and once we reach lambing season, the course is no longer available and so we won't have this event again until 2021. Another casualty was the Masters Classic Cross Country Relay, which is held on a popular course that needs to be booked a long way in advance.

## Needle Relay

Our first event was the Needle Relay, a new event which has been introduced to replace the Bays Relay. The Bays Relay has been a problem event for a while, as it is a point-to-point 21km race on open roads. The traffic management costs have been steadily rising for many years and it had six marshall-heavy points (start, finish, handovers). The replacement version is still five legs but every leg starts and finishes at the same point, the wind needle (hence the name) corner in Kilbirnie, using an out and back course entirely on footpaths. To ease congestion and provide variety, the laps alternate in direction and distance, so laps one, three and five are 5km (heading south initially) and laps two and four are 3km (heading west initially). Over 400 athletes participated in the Needle Relay and apart from a brisk wind in the latter couple of laps, the weather was glorious. Last year's Bays Relay took place in torrential rain, freezing temperatures and strong winds; it seemed the weather gods approved of the event change.

In the M35-49 grade, Geoff Ferry got the Wellington Scottish B team off to strong start, running 5km in 15:44. (To be fair, Scottish had entered five teams into the grade, with the idea that the first couple of teams were evenly strong so the distinction between A and B was not meaningful.) Dan Clendon (WHAC A) handed over the baton in second place in 16:09, 4s ahead of Scottish A's Stephen Day. Dan and Stephen were dead even 5m from the finish but Stephen clipped a cone on the tight turn to the handover and took a tumble to surrender those 4s. Scottish B's Andy Ford lost 10s to Scottish A's Valentino Luna Hernandez, but kept an 18s lead while WHAC (James Waite) moved down to third. Paul Barwick extended Scottish B's lead but in lap four, Andrew Wharton brought Scottish A back to within 5s. So B's Rowan Hooper set off with A's James Richardson in hot pursuit. What Scottish A didn't know at this point is their lap three runner, Alasdair Saunders, had been spotted by an official running on the road instead of the footpath for a two minute penalty. As it happens Rowan

ran a few seconds quicker than James, so the penalty merely increased the gap and did not change the finishing order. WHAC finished a distant third, the only non-Scottish team in the top four.

In the W35 grade, Mel Stevens gave Scottish A a 16s lead on WHAC's Helen Ewing, with Olympic a distant third. Scottish extended their lead with fastest lap times through the next three laps through Emily Solsberg, Carla Denneny and Fiona Hayvice. While WHAC's Tamara Winkler cut into the lead by nearly two minutes, Emma Bassett finished for Scottish A with a 90s advantage. WHAC finished 11 minutes ahead of Olympic for the minor podium spots.

Scottish led from start to finish in the M50 after Grant Mclean kicked things off with a 90s lead that Peter Stevens, James Turner, Dave Kettles and Michael Wray held at a final margin of four minutes. Despite Paul Hewitson running one of the fastest M50 5km times WHAC never threatened and were only two minutes ahead of Scottish B in the race for second.

In the W50 grade, Scottish were dominant as their teams finished first, third, fourth and fifth. Anna Guy, Helen Bradford and Heather Walker ran fastest laps for Scottish A, while Angela Clark and Cathy Alderton were fastest in laps three and four to keep Olympic in a comfortable second place.

In the Open 60 grade, Olympic's Graeme Moss had the early lead, almost a minute ahead of Scottish A. Chris Harp brought Scottish into the lead after lap two, a lead they only extended there-on thanks to John Gardiner, Dave Hatfield and Michael Cummins. In lap three Geoff Smith brought WHAC up into second, their eventual position, while Olympic held third from Scottish B by a large margin.

## Johnsonville Road Race

We then held our Johnsonville road race. The weather conditions for this year's event were perfect – no wind, sunny with cool temperatures. This year 20 runners and 13 walkers took part, so a little down on last year. Fastest male walker over the hilly four-lap course was Sean Lake (Scottish) and Jackie Wilson (Trentham) was the fastest women. Fastest male runner over the five-lap course was Paul Hewitson (WHAC) and Katie Jenkins (Olympic) was the fastest woman. The Jim Lockhart and Mariette Hewitson Baton for the time closest to an age group record was won by Katie Jenkins. The club team for the runners was won by Scottish and Scottish also won the club team for the walkers

## University Relays

The University relays took place the following weekend, attracting 400-odd again. The sun came out but so did the wind,



as a very strong southerly made for testing conditions. The M35-49 grade was once again a battle between two Scottish teams. Scottish B held the early lead thanks to Hiro Tanimoto and Valentino Luna Hernandez but Rowan Hooper and James Richardson converted a 17s deficit into a 1:46 lead by the end. Trentham scored third place, thanks to a blistering Brian Garmonsway performance. Scottish A led the M50s from start to finish as Grant McLean ran fastest lap, 33s ahead of WHAC's Paul Hewitson, providing a lead that Dave Kettles, Michael Wray and Peter Stevens extended. On the final lap, Gerard Gordon brought Scottish B from third to second, 90-odd seconds ahead of WHAC.

In the W35 grade, Scottish ran fastest times on each lap through Mel Stevens, Fiona Hayvice, Carla Denny and Emily Solsberg, for a storming 14 minute win over second place Kapiti. Scottish B were third, holding off another Scottish team by 90s. In the W50s, Heather Walker, Anna Guy, Melissa Moon and Helen Bradford for Scottish A were all fastest laps and they finished nearly two minutes ahead of Olympic. In the battle for third place, Scottish C thrashed Scottish B.

Unfortunately we lost our next scheduled event as the Wellington Cross Country Champs were postponed from August to 6 September. When the alert level extension was announced, we tried to negotiate with the council for use of the course under an alert level two plan but our right of use was dependent on being at alert level one. The next available date for the course was not until October, so we reluctantly accept the further crowding of the calendar, particularly given the cancellation of the NZ Cross Country Championships (and its replacement with a "challenge" event) meant we would not hold this race for 2020.

## Wellington Road Championships

The Wellington Road Championships were able to proceed. The course for this event has only one access point, which means we could control entry/departure and still stage the event under level two gathering limits by splitting the races into four different sittings, where each group had to have departed before the next group arrived. Consequently, the races took the whole day, instead of just the afternoon but it worked. It did mean having two heats for the 10km race and consolidating the results later. The intention was to offer the first 10km heat to runners needing more than 40 minutes and the second 10km heat to faster runners but each athlete was free to choose whichever heat worked best.

Trentham's Brian Garmonsway ran his third consecutive win in the masters men, beating Geoff Ferry (Scottish) in by almost 90s with Stephen Day another 10s behind. For the M50, Peter Stevens defended his title to beat Paul Hewitson to the line, while Dave Kettles claimed third. Mel Stevens continued the theme of repeat champions, winning the masters women again; Ingrid Cree and Lindsay Barwick completed the podium spots. For the W50s, Vickie Humphries won for the seventh consecutive year. Cathy Alderton came second and blind runner Maria Williams, running with guide Trisha Sloan, came third. The M60 grade was once again won by Todd Krieble, followed by Michael Cummings and Graeme Moss, while the M70 grade saw Brian Hayes defend his title as Paul Rodway and Tony Dawbin also took the medals. Michele Allison won the W60, making it the grade to have a new winner, with Betty Harp and Bev Hodge second and third. The W70 grade was vacant this year.



Mel Stevens - Wellington Scottish W35A team - NZ Road Relays



James Richardson - NZ Road Relays

PHOTOS: Sharon Wray

# Canterbury

by Andrew Stark

PHOTO: Steve Duxfield

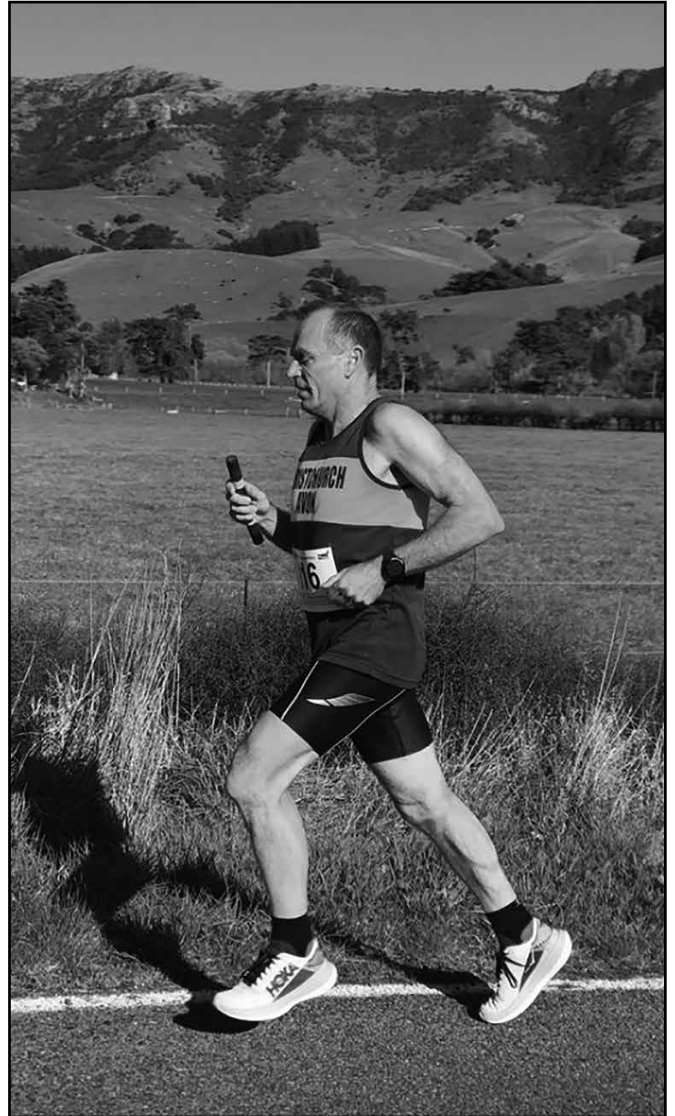


*Tim Cross (Nelson) narrowly leading Andrew Stark (Canterbury), in the NZ Road Relay Championships*

Like all centres throughout New Zealand, this winter season has been disrupted by the Covid-19 gathering restrictions. We are lucky in Canterbury that we have a very proactive Centre organising the cross country & road programme, so whenever possible they offered events that meet the COVID-19 health & safety requirements at the time. Full winter results can be found on the Athletics Canterbury's new website.

The Athletics Canterbury Centre has also invested time, energy and money into promoting our sport in this region. The aim has been to target community runners who never join clubs. In theory, if we offered an event they enjoyed and clubs promote themselves to these people, then some might in fact join a club.

PHOTO: courtesy Andrew Stark



*John Gamblin competing in the Over 50 Team in the Akaroa to Takahe relay*

I am not sure if that will happen, but we won't know unless we try.

The success of their initial efforts was evident with the Takahe to Akaroa (8 per team) & Allandale to Cooptown (6 per team) Relays held in September. Last year there were 36 teams and this season there were 62 teams. They also introduced a 2 person and 4 person team options. Next year this event will be hosting the NZ Road Relay Championships and also possibly again in 2022.

For those who are keen to compete in the longer events, I look forward to seeing many of you here next year.



# Otago

by John Stinson

## NZ Cross Country Challenge

The Athletics NZ Cross Country Challenge held in Dunedin on Saturday 29 August proved a highly successful and well organized event. Unfortunately due to the Covid 19 imposed travel restrictions affecting Auckland the event did not qualify as a New Zealand Championship. In spite of this and the limited numbers of spectators there was a still a great atmosphere and sense of occasion throughout the day. The course was held around the sand-based Chisholm Park Golf Links - an ideal cross country venue with plenty of tough undulations but also providing excellent footing and proving fair for everyone.

The Local Organizing Committee (LOC) headed by Margaret Knox and Brent Halley received plenty of praise for the work put into staging such a difficult logistical exercise. Their task made easier by the excellent co-operation received from the Chisholm Park Golf Club Executive. The hope is that the full New Zealand Cross Country Championship may be held at the same venue in 2021.

The Otago masters contingent made the most of a home venue by securing a number of medals right across the board. Their individual total was 5 gold, 6 silver and 8 bronze. Additionally team wins were recorded in the W35-49 and the W50+ age groups. Notable among the gold medal runs was the legendary Myrtle Rough who won the W75-79 6k race still showing all the natural enjoyment that has served her so well through all her competitive running years. Myrtle's gained additional pleasure through her daughter Shireen Crumpton also securing a gold in the W35-49 6k race. Other gold medal runs were recorded by Kristy Eyles W35-39, Christine Montgomery W50-54, and Gail Sharp W55-59.

## Worldwide Masters Virtual Challenge

Noni Callander has supplied the following report on the virtual throwing and jumping competition. "Six NZ athletes competed with distinction in the throwing and jumping events at the Caledonian Ground on Saturday 19 July as part of the Worldwide Masters Virtual Challenge. The Challenge was set up to encourage masters athletes to stay fit and keep up their training during these difficult Covid 19 times, especially those who would have otherwise have competed in the cancelled Toronto World Masters Athletics Championships. The Dunedin events were in category B being held at an official facility with local officials, but not during an official meeting. There was a lot of fun to be had on a fine cool Dunedin morning encouraging and supporting each other. Some achieved PB's, some were winners, some had hoped to do better but all were pleased to achieve at least one placing. Well done New Zealand. Many thanks to Fiona Harvey for organising everything, including the delicious scones and hot drinks."

## SI Masters T&F Championships

The South Island Masters Track and Field Championships will be held in Dunedin 13-15 November 2020. At this stage, all is looking good with hopefully reduced Covid 19 levels in place making travel plans far easier for all involved. A throws pentathlon will be held at the Caledonian Ground on Sunday 30 September.

The Annual General Meeting of the Otago Masters Athletics Association will be held in the Athletics Otago Rooms at the Caledonian Ground, Logan Park Drive, Dunedin on Wednesday 23 September at 7pm.

# Oceania Masters Athletics Championships Norfolk Island 2021 - Postponed

Having considered the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the continuing uncertainty in relation to international travel restrictions, the Local Organising Committee (LOC) for the 2021 Oceania Masters Athletics Championships regret to advise that the Championships have been postponed from January 2021 until the week of the 10th to 14th January 2022.

The Chair of the LOC and member of the Oceania Masters Athletics Council, Tim Rogers, advised that the LOC had left the decision on postponement as late as it could in the hope that there would be greater certainty around travel and the ability for as many Member Federations from across the Oceania region to participate as possible.

The LOC is grateful for the support from all local suppliers and stakeholders and looks forward to working closely with them over the next 18 months to ensure the Championships are a success.

Details of the new dates and further information will be updated on the Athletics Norfolk Island website: [athleticsnorfolkisland.com](http://athleticsnorfolkisland.com)

# Hawke's Bay/Gisborne

by Maurice Callaghan

Since the staging of the 2020 NZ Masters Champs at the Regional Sports Park in Hastings, a notable increase in older athletes out running has been observed. Is this a new "get fit" regime or a bid for glory at the next championship meeting?

I have approached a few about their activity and surprisingly three people answered they are interested in competing at a higher level after watching our NZ champs. It begs the question how many others are out there who would compete at Masters events if they knew about us. A very unscientific survey by yours truly revealed that most of the out and about runners thought Masters was for athletes over the age of 50!

I suspect there is a very good pool of talent of ex-athletes, who having settled into married life, had their family and now that the kids are teenagers or off their hands, are looking to get back into some sort of physical activity. How best can we target this pool? This is a question our region will look to address and I suggest other regions can also.

Earlier this year, I attended an athletic league meeting at Masterton and noted with interest the number of "master age" athletes competing in the middle distance and walk events and

I wondered how many of these athletes compete in Master's events. The potential pool is there, we just need to figure out how to tap into it. We are interested in any ideas or suggestions on how to do so.

For the interest of those who competed at this year's NZ Masters Champs at the Regional Sports Park even more activities are planned for this complex. Now known as Mitre 10 Sports Park, the indoor running track is to be lengthened to enable 60m sprints and many high performance athletes are based here for a couple of months over winter. A full size Olympic standard swimming pool is on the drawing board and construction is hoped to commence on this by the end of the year. This will help make the park one of the best sporting complexes in the country.

Because of the Covid pandemic many have had training schedules interrupted but at level 2, given the right procedure's, that excuse can no longer be used to dodge training! Day light saving will soon be with us, so dust off your trainers and get back into it!

Remember to stay safe and be kind.

## Coaching Corner

by Mike Weddell

Athletics is an individual sport but as in most human activities, individual or otherwise the best results come from team work. The basic team in athletics is the athlete and coach but more effectively is a group of athletes and a coach. The presence of another person in an enterprise creates peer pressure. Peer pressure gets a bad rap as miscreants often blame it for stupid decisions they have made. However, it can and often does have a positive influence.

A few weeks ago one of our coaching nights was cold, wet and windy yet most of the group turned up. I think that if everyone was training on their own some, or even most, would have been tempted to give it a miss and only the most highly motivated would have battled the elements.

Training is most effective if it is consistent over an extended period and that is where peer pressure comes into its own. Training with friends or running acquaintances makes training more enjoyable and brings a social element to sport. I believe that this social

element makes training more effective. The outstanding example of the effectiveness of group training is the Arthur Lydiard squad of the early 1960s.

When I was at university in the early 1970s, the mover and shaker of distance running was Alan Storey who later launched Mo Farah on his international career. Alan organised a daily early morning run starting at 7.15am and a long run at a more civilised hour on Sunday. In my last year at Durham I missed only two of those runs and my running improved considerably. Joe Paton, one of the other regulars, went on to represent Scotland at the World Cross Country Championships.

Despite having individual goals, the training sessions were enjoyable in themselves. So, if you want to get the best out of your running join a group of like minded runners and you can spur each other on to greater things.



# Southland

by Dwight Grieve

I think there is simply only one way to start this article – COVID is a dick!! OK I feel better now having vented. The whole COVID thing has been a huge stress on everyone for everything in our lives, including our sport. At least as individuals we have been able to adapt and still train with events being conducted with a different approach like virtual events. See elsewhere in this issue for the great report by Lester Laughton and others on the World virtual throws challenge.

Down here in the deep south we have seen some positives from the whole affair as level one corresponded with the harrier season and the best numbers for many years. It seems many people took the opportunity during the COVID period to get out and enjoy the outdoors, then joining in the harrier atmosphere. Even though there has been the need to rearrange provincial and national events, at least we have a plan. The respective cross-country champs are completed but the road races are coming up. Our masters group is still strong down here, with the M40s being highly competitive making it fun and driving us all on for more.

## Southland Cross Country Champs

In Southland we make an annual migration to Gore for our champs and organiser Graham Hall's new course. Every year he changes it up based on the same basic course - it always has some mud, hills, mud, trees, mud and lots of fun - 2020 didn't disappoint.

There was some great competition throughout the MW age groups this year but yet again Debbie Telfer in the W60+ age group showed her pure class with the overall win. She simply doesn't slow as the years go by, with over a minute and a half win. Second home was Kylie Davidson followed by Gail Kirkman. Age group medals went to: W35-49 – Gold - Kylie Davidson; Silver – Lisa Simpson; W50-59 – Gold - Fiona Turnbull; W60+ - Gold - Debbie Telfer; Silver – Gail Kirkman; Bronze – Dorothy Horrell.

For the men it was a changing of the guard. For many years Kelvin Meade has picked up silver behind Dwight Grieve and this year he has trained very hard and made some impressive gains. Dwight entered the race as a senior but Kelvin beat him and all other masters in dominant fashion, nearly taking out the under 20 winner in the process. A great result for Kelvin after doing the hard yards.

Overall masters men – First was Kelvin, followed by Scott Underhay and Craig Iverson, who only had 3s between them at the line.

In the older age groups John Wallace and Mervyn Potter had a stunning battle with only 2s between them at the finish, while in the 60+ Gary Kirkman was dominant with 2 and a half minutes up his sleeve. Age group medals went to:

*(continued overleaf)*



PHOTOS: supplied by Dwight/Lee Grieve

Southland singlets of Kelvin Meade, Scott Underhay and Craig Iverson

M35-49 – Gold - Kelvin Meade; Silver – Scott Underhay; Bronze – Craig Iverson; M50 – 59 – Gold - John Wallace; Silver – Mervyn Potter; Bronze – Graham Neilson; M60+ - Gold - Gary Kirkman; Silver – Graham Hall; Bronze – Evan McIntosh.

Teams wise it was very exciting as the finishes were so close but by the tightest of margins Fiordland snuck in for the second year in a row ahead of Invercargill club.

### NZ Cross Country Challenge – Dunedin

Ok, back to COVID sucking and the champs becoming a challenge without Auckland but at least it went ahead - with a huge effort from Athletics NZ and Otago to make it happen. I went to Dunedin thinking it may not have the full atmosphere, but it lacked nothing and there were some very competitive fields and great racing. I was also very impressed by the professional filming and live screening of the event for the supporters that were not allowed to be at the course to keep numbers below 100. Again, it was obvious how much effort organisers had done to make it happen.

The course would have to be one of the best I have run on for a true cross country race. Based on a links golf course the surface was perfect without too much mud but just enough to keep you thinking. There were some honest wee climbs and constant undulations that made it a good all around course that made you think as well as simply run. Many did not give it the respect it deserved and blew up in the latter stages.

In the master's women's races Southland's highlight had to be Debbie Telfer. I think I say this every year as she keeps backing it up and running so well. She won the W60 – 64 age group by over 4 and a half minutes! A stunning dominant win. Watching from the side lines she still runs so very relaxed and controlled. Anyone looking at longevity in our sport would do well to sit down and have a talk with Debbie. It isn't luck that she is so good year upon year - not just hard work but a smart approach.

Also racing was Linda Te Au and Lee Grieve. Lee a traditional thrower in masters athletics gets dragged along to the running by her husband and joins in the spirit of the events to have a go, and it paid off with a sneaky bronze medal in the W40-45 age group. I believe there was a wee cheeky comment to her husband about why he trains so much when she gets a medal on throwers training!

On the men's side of things Evan McIntosh is a warhorse who always makes an appearance - I would love to know how many champs he has participated in. Now in the M70-75 age group Evan took home yet another NZ Champs medal with a bronze for the cabinet.

The younger master men in Southland have had some great competition and support with a team of 6 in the M40-45 and M45-49 age groups. It was great to see that many Southland singlets in amongst the sea of Canterbury red and Otago blue. As a group we have lots of interclub banter but all of that is simply to push everybody along to better performances (I did mention Fiordland won the club team title? : he he he).

The race turned out to be a ripper, with Iain MacDonald throwing down the gauntlet early on and led all in the early parts of the race gaining a solid lead. After the first of the four 2km laps things settled down with the front masters having a gap between each other ahead of a close chasing pack. Into the 3rd lap the toughness of the course showed as some started to

suffer, Dwight Grieve, Kelvin Meade and Ben Wreford started picking off those ahead and going into the final lap Dwight had the overall lead with Kelvin and Ben neck and neck. Dwight held the lead to the finish with a 20s win ahead of Kelvin who managed to out sprint Ben to the line. A Southland one-two finish at a national champs (challenge) hasn't been done in my memory and it is great to see the positive culture coming through.

For team medals it was a very close fought battle, no one knew who would have it, in the end only 6 points separated winners Otago, Southland silver and Canterbury bronze. I am personally proud of all 6 team Southland members, only the first 4 get medals but the other 2 are a large part of getting us across that line. The Southland team was – Dwight Grieve, Kelvin Meade, Scott Underhay, Craig Iverson, Jason Russel, Andrew Horton.

### Looking ahead

Hmmmm this could be tricky with the current world wide situation but I will remain positive that we will be fine. The Southland Road champs line up next in the Southland calendar, followed by the Southland festival of running which includes the Southland marathon champs. Then one eye goes to the NZ Road champs in Auckland. Fingers crossed we all get to gather together this year for it. Otherwise spring has sprung, lambs abound in the paddocks, daffodils bloom, and the days lengthen, so get out there and enjoy life - as COVID has showed us all we simply need to get out, be positive and look after each other.



Silver to Kelvin Meade in sprint finish from Ben Wreford



*Southland harrier president and all round lovely person - Linda Te Au*



*Dominant Gold to Debbie Telfer*



*Mens masters podium - NZ Cross Country Challenge 2020*



L to R: Craig Holden M35, Fiona Hayvice W35, Bill Wang M35, partly obscured Nat Hardaker W35, Carla Denny W35 and Iain Shaw M35 10km - Wellington Road Championships

PHOTO: Sharon Wray

## COMING EVENTS

With the recent advent of the COVID-19 virus, these events may be subject to change, postponement or even cancellation. Please check with the event organisers directly, as we have no control over the decisions made by the individual event organisers.

### 2020

13 - 15 NOVEMBER	South Island Masters T&F Championships	DUNEDIN
5 DECEMBER	NZMA 10000m Championship	WELLINGTON

### 2021

26 - 28 FEBRUARY	NZMA T&F Championships	INGLEWOOD
TBA	WMA Stadia Championships	TAMPERE, FINLAND

### 2022

10 - 14 JANUARY	Oceania Masters Athletics Championships	NORFOLK ISLAND
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### 2023

TBA	WMA Stadia Championships	GOTHENBURG, SWEDEN
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Having considered the impact of the Covid19 pandemic and the continuing uncertainty in relation to international travel restrictions, the Local Organising Committee (LOC) for the 2021 Oceania Masters Athletics Championships regret to advise that the Championships have been postponed from Jan 2021 until the **10th to 14th Jan 2022**.

**Register your interest for 2022** – to receive regular updates on OMA event announcements & travel packages as they become available. Please send your name, address, email & phone contact to: [maria@travelcentre.nf](mailto:maria@travelcentre.nf)



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