

The Ten Kilometre Road Race

Wellington Master's Championship

I first ran as a pre-vet, Easter 1977. This was a National Track and Field event, held at Newtown Park. There was a 9km Road Race run for pre-vets - Barry Everitt winning this event - I was third. In 1978 when I was 40, I joined the Veterans Association as it was then called, and have been a member ever since.

In those days the only events the Masters held in Wellington, apart from the track and field, were four or five runs a year, from various club rooms, (Wellington; Scottish; Hutt Valley or Trentham) on Sunday afternoons from 2 o'clock. Veterans would have a run; (about one to two hours) have a cup of tea or coffee and go.

At the 1980 AGM, Frank Hamlin became President, with Rob Sutton Secretary (both Wellington Harriers), and myself a committee member. I cannot remember who else was on the committee but when I left the committee in 1985, the committee had Nola Green (Scottish), Peggy Fletcher (Olympic), Colleena Blair, Gordon Smith (Hutt Valley) and Keith Stewart (Trentham), to name a few that I can remember.

After most of us had competed very successfully at the 4th Masters Games, held in January and February 1981 at Christchurch's Queen Elizabeth Park we thought about organizing a 10km Road Race for Veteran Athletes, which was first run on the 14th November 1981.

The 10km Race was run from Naenae Pool down Cambridge Terrace, under the Railway line at Guthrie Street, back up Oxford Terrace, over the bridge at Wingate, finishing at Naenae Pool. I cannot remember how many people were in the race, but from memory, Roger Robinson was the winner. I was race director till 1985, followed by Gordon Smith, then Ian Jacobson (both Hutt Valley Harriers), followed by Bruce Perry, and in recent years, Peter Wrigley (Scottish). I might have missed someone and for this I apologise. I cannot remember when the start was changed to Manuka Street in Lower Hutt - up Oxford Terrace and back. It now starts at Sacred Heart College, Bellevue Road, Lower Hutt.

I have only a few 1993 results, 62 runners and 10 walkers so the walking section must have started about that time. Winner Ted McLachlan - time 31.45, which is most probably the fastest time ever. In the women Wendy Stewart (Masterton), time 36.01 in 1991. This could also be the fastest time for women.

Last year we introduced a 5km race with the 10km but only one person competed, along with 9 Walkers and 15 runners in the 10km. With Grant McLean (Scottish) running a time of 31.44 in 2008, it would most probably be the fastest time for many years.

I have always liked competing in the 10km in Lower Hutt, as it is a good flat course, and after living in Johnsonville until recently where all my runs were up and down hills, it was good to do some running on the flat.

Brian Watson