

Leith Times



Congratulations everyone on a successful 2007 Winter Harrier season. It was great to see good performances in all grades and at all levels from the Club races through to national events.

Thanks to all who have taken photos at the races and sent them in – these are great for the newsletter and also for the photo album on the website. Stories or photos for the next issue can be emailed to Andrew Lonie at maps@paradise.net.nz

In this issue:

- Barnes Cross Country
- Club Cross Country – ‘The Chingford Challenge’
- Hughes Road Race
- Otago XC Champs
- Nat XC Champs
- Walking Group Report
- Wanaka Wanders
- Tenpin Bowling Report
- Clyde to Alex
- Edmond Cup – 50 years ago and now
- Moro Half/Full Marathon

This issue coincides with our president Rod McCall having just emigrated with his family to Melbourne. We wish Rod, Andrea, Liam and Izaak all the best and thank them all for their commitment and involvement in the club, especially in 2007 when Rod did an excellent job as president.

Noticeboard

Summer track and field roster: During the track and field season you may be contacted to help on a Saturday afternoon at the Caledonian. This season Leith’s duty events are javelin and discus. If you are available please take the opportunity to come and help – it is straightforward and lightens the load on everyone if you do your bit.

Funding for national events: if you wish to apply for funding for national events, please

contact Adele Poulter on 454 6407. Ideally you should contact Adele three months before the event, to allow time to get applications in.

Chris Sole’s training sessions

- Mondays, 5 pm Steady run starting from Chris Sole’s place, 5 Monro St, Maori Hill
- Tuesdays, 5.20pm Track session at Caledonian Ground, Logan Park
- Wednesday 1 pm Steady run from Chris Sole’s place 5 Monro St
- Thursdays, 5.20 pm Track session at Caledonian
- Friday, 12.30 pm Steady run from Chris Sole’s place 5 Monro St

Note: program subject to change, especially between track/harrier seasons – contact Chris Sole 4676527 for the latest schedule.

Other training sessions

- Sunday, 9 am Longer run leaving from John McGlashan field, Maori Hill. Contact Marc Boullé (4667962) to confirm.

Barnes Cross Country

The Barnes Cross Country was held on Sunday 27 May in very testing conditions – a howling southerly, reported to be like ‘running into a brick wall’.

First up race was the Men’s with a good field of 51 considering the conditions. As usual Leith was very competitive in the teams race (Graham Anderson 3rd, Mark O’Donnell 6th, Rod McCall 7th, Andrew Lonie 15th, Jason Palmer 18th and Alan Funnell 25th), but was not quite able to take first place due to a strong cohort of Ariki runners bisecting the Leith team. Fastest Leith time was Andrew Lonie (18:28 – 6th overall) followed by Alan Funnell who had a good run of 18:56 (11th overall).

The Leith highlight was Annie Mekhail winning the women's race, from a handicap of 45 seconds (time 21:27). Annie took the lead early and from thereon was never caught, a superb effort in her first harrier season. Also competing in the women's race were Sarah Walker (17:20) and Jill Alexander (17:41) who both ran good times.

Leith had two competitors in the Women's 16 and under race, Talia Allison who finished 2nd and Sarah Thomas 5th – well done!



Barnes Cross Country: Sarah Thomas was 5th in the Women's Under 16 race and also gained 5th fastest time (Photo: Andrew Lonie).

Chingford Challenge

The inaugural 'Chingford Challenge' took place in wintry muddy conditions at the Leith home grounds. This event doubled as a teams challenge with the University Club and as the Leith Cross-Country Championships.

The big positive from this event was the great turnout of University runners despite bad weather and looming exams. The event looks set to continue and is great for interclub spirit.

The course was a 2km loop incorporating the grounds of Chingford Park as well as the hilly woodland loop track behind the grounds. The women's race incorporated two laps and the

men's race three. A separate 500m course was devised for the boys and girls Under 12.



Julian O'Hagan demonstrates the preferred method of crossing the finish line, observed by his president (Photo: Jason Palmer).



...and after the event (Photo: Jason Palmer).

Kirsty Morris took control of the women's race and finished in a time of 17:38, over a minute clear of second placegetter Erin Whitla (OU). However as third and fourth spots were also filled by University, their team of Whitla, Emma Waller and Annika Edmondson were victorious over Morris, Sarah Walker and Jill Alexander. Also competing for Leith were Alison Sargeant, and Annie Mekhail, who won the Under 19 Leith Cross Country title.

The men's race was a battle up-front between Sam Kidd (OU) and Neale McLanachan. Kidd was eventually too strong, but Neale finished in a very good time of 22:40 to claim the Leith Cross Country title. Such was his run that he also won the Sealed Handicap. Third and fourth was also a battle, this time between Andrew Lonie and Thomas Refoy-Butler, with Thomas strong up the hill track but Andrew managing to come through on the muddy flat ground. Next Leith runner was Glen Ferguson, recovering after a great 70 minute half marathon in Christchurch just 6 days earlier, and then an improving Mark O'Donnell. The Leith team of McLanachan, Lonie, Ferguson, O'Donnell, Richard Hendry and John Bayne won with 36 points compared to University's 60.

In the Boys and Girls Under 12 race, Liam McCall won in 3:11 but not far behind were Natalie Pascoe (3:19) and Reuben Knox (3:26). Also competing were Izaak McCall, Erin Knox and Bruce Knox.

Hughes Road Race

The Hughes Handicap Road Races were held on Saturday 7th July in fine but very cold north easterly conditions – in fact care was needed on remnant ice behind the coolstores on Wharf St.

Race 1: Boys and Girls 12 and Under: 500m.

There were only four to contest this race in sunny but cold conditions. Bruce Knox ran well to his (off go) handicap to lead from start to finish. Hayden Funnell finished with the fastest time.

Race 2: Open: 10 000m (out to the Vauxhall Yacht club and back). Christine Leith held on in the face of a bitterly cold North Easter and the fast finishing Graham Anderson to win the Hughes Memorial 10km Handicap Trophy. Graham Anderson finished a strong second,

while Mark O'Donnell overhauled Mr Handicapper "Jim Flynn", over the last 50 metres to finish in third place. Andrew Lonie (34:59) achieved fastest time.



Christine Leith about to cross the line to win the Hughes 10km handicap (Photo: Marc Boulle).



Erin Knox: note snow on Otago Peninsula in background! (Photo: Andrew Lonie).

Otago Cross Country

The Otago Cross Country Championships were held at Waikouaiti Racecourse on 21 July. Despite a strong southerly in town, conditions were easier further north by the time of the race, and the track was fairly hard and fast.

The meeting began with the open 4000m race in which Julian O'Hagan came th in a time of 16.06, despite being late for the start!

Leith's entrants in the junior races were all in the Under 12 and Under 14 categories. It has been good to see good numbers in these age groups and is a promising sign for the club in the next few years. In the Girls Under 12 race (1500m), Erin Knox was 13th in a time of 8.56. In the Boys Under 12 section, Liam McCall did very well to finish 8th among a bunch of Hill City runners, his time 6.52. Reuben Knox and Hayden Funnell also did well, finishing 16th and 18th in 8.08 and 8.19 respectively. In the Girls Under 14 race (3000m), Talia Allison was 7th in a time of 15.18. Unfortunately due to injury or illness there were no Leith entries in either the Senior Women or Masters Women Grades. However there were plenty in the corresponding Men's grades.



Masters Men race: Glen Ferguson on his way to victory, closely followed by Dave Rush who finished second (Photo: Karen Hartshorn).

In the Masters Men race, Leith excelled in both the MM35 and the MM50 sections. Glen

Ferguson repeated last year's feat with a clear victory in the MM35 race in a time of 27.22, and also finished second overall (the race was combined with the Men Under 19). Not far behind was a very fit Dave Rush in a time of 27.38. Third Leith Masters Man and 4th MM35 overall was Alan Funnell. Richard Hendry, Ray Knox and Greg Cook made up the Leith team that claimed second place, and not far behind were Brian Pascoe and Rod McCall.

In the MM50 section, Gerald Scoones, Peter Morris and Graeme Anderson were 4th, 5th and 7th and claimed a close second place in the teams.

The start to the Senior Men's race was a slow affair with brief bursts on the hill. An initial pack of eight broke up after two laps, with John Winsbury the best placed Leith runner, just being edged out to 4th place by Matt Lambert, and finishing with an excellent sub 40 min time. Next Leith runner was Andrew Lonie who had his best performance on this course finishing 7th in a time of 41.08. Mark O'Donnell and Jason Palmer finished 17th and 19th in 45.03 and 46.28, ensuring that the Leith team claimed third place.



Senior Men's race: in the early stages the leading bunch included John Winsbury and Andrew Lonie. John finished 4th and Andrew 7th (Photo: Karen Hartshorn).

National Cross Country

Having the national cross country championships at Wingatui in 2007 presented an exciting opportunity for Leith members to compete at this level. The club certainly rose to the occasion, with a swag of both individual medals and medals resulting from contributions to Otago team performances. The 11 medals won by Leith members were:

Gold

- Peter Morris, M50+ Otago team.

Silver

- Peter Morris, M55-59 individual
- Graham Anderson, M60-64 individual
- Kirsty Morris, SW Otago team



Graham Anderson on his way to silver in the National Cross Country M60-64 age group (Photo: Andrew Lonie).

Bronze

- Glen Ferguson, M40-44 individual
- Ray Knox, M45-49 individual
- John Winsbury, SM Otago team
- Andrew Lonie, SM Otago team
- Glen Ferguson, M35-49 Otago team

- Dave Rush, M35-49 Otago team
- Alan Funnell, M35-49 Otago team



Glen Ferguson: Bronze medal in the M40-44 age group (Photo: Andrew Lonie).

Clyde to Alex

This year the Clyde to Alexandra Road Race doubled as the Otago Road Championship (for grades with a championship distance of 10km). This meant that there were good numbers from other clubs to rival Leith's usual good turnout.

However competition was also hot in the 10 km walk, with a breakaway Leith runners group of Dave Sharp, Helen Hendry and Ron McLay-Barnes joining experienced walkers Janette Anderson and Susan Hellyer.

Waiting on the bus at Clyde the walkers' preparation looked pretty serious although Ron McLay-Barnes appeared to have a greater case of the nerves than Sharp. Perhaps Sharp's cool calm collected preparation was a factor in his

victory in the walk, crossing the line in a time of 59:30, over five minutes ahead of his nearest competitor, his old Caversham clubmate Colin Dick (who showed great sportsmanship in coming onto the Leith bus at the finish to congratulate the winner in person!). Ron ended up with a very good third place, showing that Leith may be better to walk rather than run this event in future. Not to be outdone in the women's section, Helen Hendry, Janette Anderson and Susan Hellyer were 4th, 5th and 9th in the women's section, out of a field of 80. Another nice touch was that Dave and wife Gail now both have their names on the 10km walk trophy!



Dave Sharp was confidently prepared in the minutes leading up to his victory in the 10k walk (Photo: Andrew Lonie).

As far as the running went, Leith once again performed consistently well across the Senior, Veteran and Masters Men and Women's grades.

Senior Women. Kirsty Morris put in a great performance to finish 3rd in 35:52, a mere 7 seconds behind Sarah Chisnall. Alison Sargeant ran a huge personal best of 42:35, eclipsing her previous mark by about five minutes. Karen

Hartshorn finished 20th in a time of 51:08, having not long recovered from major illness.

'Veteran Women' (MW35). The 'Thursday Night' runners trio of Clare Pascoe, Christine Leith and Alison Perry all ran well, finishing in 10th, 12th and 13th place with less than a minute between them. Janice McCready was also well up the placings, finishing in a time of 51:49.

'Masters Women' (MW50+). Adele Poulter was Leith's sole competitor in this grade, and ran well to finish in a time of 57:42.

Senior Men. Despite not being entirely happy with his run, John Winsbury was Leith's best performer in this grade, finishing 5th (8th overall) in a time of 31:45. Next was Andrew Lonie (6th SM/10th overall) who ran exactly the same time as last year, 32:19! Neale McLanachan (33:49) was still getting over injury problems, but his 13th placing meant that Leith was second in the teams after Arika. Mark O'Donnell was arguably the best performer, gaining a PB of 34:42.

'Veteran Men' (MM40). Leith was not able to claim first place in this grade (which went to Chris Dagg), but from thereon they took 8 of the next 10 places. Glen Ferguson ran a very good time of 31:37, improving slightly on 2006. Following him were Dave Rush (4th, 34:12), Ray Knox (5th, 34:51), Alan Funnell (6th, 35:03), Richard Hendry (7th, 35:37), Greg Cook (9th, 36:49), Julian O'Hagan (10th, 37:42) and just one second behind, Andrew Perry (11th, 37:43).

'Masters Men' (MM50). The best Leith performer in this grade was Marc Boule who was 5th in 37:39. Next were Dave McLean (38:59) and Ed Stevens (39:35), with Pete Nees also having a good run of 43:32.

Walkers' Report

Janette Anderson

The 2007 winter season saw 6 to 12 walkers each week. Suggestions from various members resulted in an interesting variety of walks during the year.

Away from the valley we walked in the Port Chalmers, Three Mile Hill, Fraser's

Gully, Wingatui, Tomahawk, Flagstaff, Ross Creek and Helensburgh areas. Some of these incorporated café visits. On one occasion we were joined by a pet sheep at Upper Junction. (not mine! – ed.) Visits from and to other clubs are always enjoyed, giving us the opportunity to share ideas.



The walking group out and about – Jill Cullen, Gwenda Farquharson, Dorothy and Kevin Blair, and Graham Anderson (Photo: Janette Anderson).

Thank you to those who organised walks in my absence.

Day walks/tramps are planned for the second Saturday of each of the months of December, February and March. If you would like to join us call Janette on 476 2830.

Edmond Cup – Then and Now

50 Years Ago, by Cliff Donaldson

Fifty years ago the Leith Club had a vintage harrier season, having won the Lovelock Relay, filled 2nd place in the Barnes Cross-Country Teams' race (a more popular race in those days), and romped away with the McIndoe Casket teams event, which was also a popular Otago/Southland interclub contest. When it came to the Edmond Cup Steeplechase, a keen contest between Leith and Caversham clubs was expected for the coveted cup. 'Williams and Leith Win Harrier Steeples' read the headline in the O.D.T., and the article continued: 'By a margin of five points over Caversham, Leith Harriers on Saturday scored their first win in the Edmond Cup Steeplechase. It was the fifty-fourth time that coveted trophy had been at stake. Leith's captain,

Kerry Williams, the New Zealand cross-country champion, led all the way and won individual honours by 35 yards from Pat Sidon (Caversham). It was Williams' fourth win in the event.

The teams' race resolved itself into a struggle between Leith and Caversham, both of which had won one event staged by the Otago Athletic Centre this season. The first five runners of the Leith six-man team had finished before Caversham had its fourth runner across the line. From this stage, however, it was all Caversham, and its team was the first to finish all inside the first 20.

Leith supporters had their moments of anxiety as runner after runner crossed the line, and still no competitor appeared in blue and white halves. S. Walkinshaw ended the tension when he completed Leith's team and finished in 30th place to give Leith victory with 65 points to Caversham's 70. It was Leith's early team work that brought success. Though Williams was busy in an individual duel with Sidon, the next four members of the team - C. Donaldson, J. Sprague, F. Perry and K. Wallis - were usually within a few dozen yards of each other throughout the first lap. At the sod wall at the beginning of the second lap, Leith had five in the first 11. Though the team began to string out in the second round and a place or two was lost by some, others compensated for this by gaining here and there.

About 160 runners representing 16 teams were dispatched on their three mile and a quarter journey. Williams established a lead of about 20 yards on Sidon down the back straight the first time round, and he was about 35 yards clear at the tape. T. Marshall (North Otago) was third all the way. G. Smith (St Kilda) ran right up to form to fill fourth place. C. Donaldson and J. Sprague (Leith) were the next two home. Donaldson held his place, and Sprague made up places in the second round.

Detailed Results:

Teams' Race. Leith (Williams 1, Donaldson 5, Sprague 6, Perry 10, Wallis 13, Walkinshaw 30)

65 points 1st

Caversham (Sidon 2, Cain 7, Skinner 9, Oakenfull 15, Kerr 17, Madigan 20)

70 points 2nd

Civil Service (Martin 8, Stewart 16, WelchJ9, Dowdall 33, Bruce 47, McMillan 62)

180 points 3rd

Individual Placings:

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------|
| 1. K.E. Williams (Leith) | 18:03 |
| 2. P.N. Sidon (Caversham) | 18:09 |
| 3. T. Marshall (Nth Otago) | 18:25 |
| 4. G. Smith (St Kilda) | 18:47 |
| 5. C. Donaldson (Leith) | 18:51 |
| 6. J. Sprague (Leith) | 19:11 |
| 7. R. Cain (Caversham) | 19:23 |
| 8. I. Martin (Civil Service) | 19:25 |
| 9. B. Skinner (Caversham) | 19:32 |
| 10. F. Perry (Leith) | 19:41 |

After heavy rain and frosts, followed by warm sunshine, the track was sloppy in places.'

Edmond Cup 2007

The 2007 Edmond Cup was the 100th anniversary race, held on Saturday 1st September after having to be cancelled earlier in the year due to heavy snow.

Leith was very well represented as usual, and there were good results all round, but the highlight of the day was Neale McLanachan winning the senior men's title in arguably the best race of his life. In the final stages of the race he still had the strength to hold out a strong challenge from Bevan Stevens (Caversham), and finish in a very impressive time of 35.21 for the gruelling 9.2 km course.

Kirsty Morris made it a double by a clear win in the Senior Women's event, finishing in a time of 19.24 for the 4.4 km course.

Other highlights for Leith were Jan Craig blitzing the Masters' Women field by over a minute to win in 22.15, and a great teams win in the Masters Men by Steve Smith (particularly good to see him back on form), Graham Anderson, and Ed Stevens, who finished 3rd, 4th and 5th.

Harbour Half Marathon – Photo Essay

A series of photos taken by Sharon Cook tell the story of the half marathon...



Leith Masters Men stick together: Richard Hendry, Greg Cook, Andrew Perry and John Bayne work as one well-oiled machine. They finished in the order shown here – 3rd, 4th, 5th and 9th in the Masters Men's placings.



Kirsty Morris won the Women's Half Marathon title, in a time of 1:20:27, and was 15th in overall placings.



Andrew Lonie had a solid run in the Half Marathon to finish 5th, in a time of 1:14:49.



Neale McLanachan followed up his sensational Edmond Cup win with a huge personal best of 1:11:08, and fourth place in the Men's Half Marathon.

Full marathon. Notable results in the marathon were Leith's sole competitor Dave McLean finishing 10th Masters Man (28th overall) in a time of 3:26:14, and ex Leith runner Julia Scoones (now Canterbury University) claiming second Senior Woman in a time of 3:18:08

Ten Pin Bowling Report

By Christine Leith

Well, what an enjoyable night was held by all who decided to go bowling on Saturday, 15th September. Much laughter was had and many interesting bowling sights. I have to say at least nobody tried to follow their ball down the lane (well not that I could see) or fly their ball out the back, which I have seen done many a time.

We all played two games and of course most of us thought we might have done better once onto our 2nd round, but some of us had no such luck.

The younger members really got into the swing of things and there seemed to be much competition going on to see what skills they could come up with and improvise on. Hayden had a good come back after his first game of 58 to just over double the score to 120 in his second game and Natalie also made double figures of 107 in her first game. But the consistency between some of the other youngster's games was amazing with only a few points difference between their first and second game.

Us more mature members, yes well, we did our best and there were some good games, Cliff Donaldson managed a 112 game and there were others that managed to pass this, like Ross with 122, who happened to join some members on Saturday while out running and they talked him into coming out to this event. Good tactics for encouraging new members! Not sure what Jeanette and Clare were up to. How did they manage to have the same score as each other, for both games? First game 89, second game 86.

Anyway, we headed off to Richard and Helen's after this, to carry on with the evening's entertainment (All Blacks v. Portugal). Thank you both, it was a lovely way to finish off the night.

National Road Relays

Leith Senior Men (by Andrew Lonie). The Leith Open Men's team consisted of Neale McLanachan, Alan Funnell, Mark O'Donnell, John Winsbury, Grant McDougall, Andrew Lonie, Andrew Perry and Jason Palmer, as well as driver/DJ/motivator Julian O'Hagan.

The team had been seeded into the B Grade, unlike the comparable but less fortunate Otago University team who were put into A Grade. Looking through the entries on the way up in the van, it seemed the team had a fair shot at winning the B Grade, with the main obstacle looking to be Canterbury University, which although their No. 2 team, boasted talent seen previously in Dunedin such as Ryan McInnes and Justin 'The Maggot' Carnaby.

After an hour's nervous pacing, Neale got things underway with his customary 'it's just like a track race' first leg. This year there was a howling norwest headwind to contend with, but Neale ran

brilliantly, leading the B Grade and Masters Men field the whole way and ending up with 8th fastest senior man and overall time on the lap. Alan Funnell followed this up with a very good run on Lap 2 of 30:15, maintaining the lead over the competition.



A focused Mark O'Donnell completes a blinder on Leg 3, ending up with 14th overall fastest lap time (Photo: Julian O'Hagan).

Then it was over to a focused Mark O'Donnell, who having trained like a madman for the past few months put in the run of the day over the demanding Pareora Gorge leg. His time of 27:43 was 14th fastest of the day and was in reality even better than that as this time included 30 seconds panicked searching for the next runner!

John was next up on the anchor leg, running amongst some top class masters opposition in the form of Kerry Rodger and Richard Bennett, and recording a very good time of 37:39 for the 11 km into a headwind, and extending the lead over Canterbury University out to over five minutes.

Grant McDougall had a good run up to the limeworks on Lap 5, recording under 4 min/km on this mainly uphill leg. He handed over to

captain Andrew Lonie who had elected to run the 8 km Lap 6 over the longer last leg due to a dose of the lurgy. The drum and bass coming from the van at top volume however kept him going at an acceptable pace. Canterbury University were at this stage making inroads though, having saved most of their top runners for the second half.

Andrew Perry ran very well up the gruelling zigzag despite the increasing heat of the day and also having had a recent illness. He was greeted at the top of the hill with Jules's yelling and a camera being shoved in his face! By the end of this lap though Canterbury Uni were only 25 seconds behind, and with their last runner being Maggot, things were always going to be tough. 'Racin' Jason' ran his heart out though, recording a time of 33:30 for the 9.4 km leg and ensuring that the team broke the four hour mark, and also bettered Otago Uni's total time. Perhaps this was the best result as winning B Grade would have meant Jason having to follow up on a rash promise of doing a victory lap in his underwear!

Leith Open Masters 50+ (by Marc Boule). The Masters 50+ team consisted in running order of Peter Morris, Graham Anderson, Dave McLean, Chris Sole, John Scoones, Ed Stevens, Marc Boule and Gerald Scoones.

Peter Morris, although battling the "lurgy", a sore hamstring and calf muscle, showed how tough the masters runners are by putting in a great sustained effort to finish his lap in 36:02 (5th MM50) to hand to Graham Anderson. Anderson put in probably the team's run of the day, to finish in 33:56 (7th MM50). Dave McLean was a revelation over his hilly lap finishing with a flourish and dramatic collapse posting a time of 30:28 (3rd MM50). Chris Sole, although short of training, still posted a good time over the gradual ascending fourth lap against a strong gusty and dry headwind. He finished in 43:16 (6th MM50). Next up was John Scoones who on short notice had to run this race but he still ran well to finish in 26:19 (11th MM50) and hand to Ed Stevens. Stevens put in his trademark steady run to be one of the Leith performers of the day with a time of 30:21 (7th MM50). Marc Boule was next up and although not as fast as last year, still managed a steady run up the hill to finish in 32:22 (5th MM50). As this stage we were lying 5th and a far way off from the 4th place team. Gerald Scoones

took up the task of trying to catch this team, but the gap was too far and he put in a good steady run to finish with a time of 36:21 (10th MM50). Great team effort guys and thanks goes to our Technical Advisor and Relay expert and driver, the honourable Steve (Skillo) Skilling for his efforts in supporting the team (even adding his trademark 'moan' on occasions). Where would we be without it?

Reports have it that all enjoyed the weekend and the race and promise to be there for next years race in Mosgiel.

The Composite Team (by Christine Leith). Well what an awesome group of runners in the Composite Team. Never a dull moment believe me.

A stop in Oamaru to obtain some watery refreshments to go with the cheese and water-biscuits on the way up was a great start to the weekend.

The Relay

Race day dawned windy & balmy
No elite runners so no expectations
Claire took off with a bang and a surge
Alison's leg gusty & warm
Bills scottish legs did him proud uphill &
down
Peter we were honored to have,
On the scorching long leg
Jim the Prof. consistently ran
Up, down Christine ran looking for water
She finally did find
Wow Karen, what's in that drink bottle ?
Up hill she did fly
Finally Sarah, brought us home in much style
and fanfare

Thanks Team

Psst: We had a leprechaun who would turn up on a bicycle to cheer us on or inform the next runner when they were nearly due to run!!

A lovely barbecue tea followed, by drinks and dancing downtown. Sunday morning breakfast was had at Friday nights venue where we watched the rugby, it was a good game and as some of us say winning isn't everything. The team would

like to thank Russell, Jacinta and Peter for their driving and wonderful support during the weekend.

Leith Masters Men 40+. The Leith Masters Men team of Ray Knox, Richard Hendry, Brian Pascoe, Glen Ferguson, Rod McCall, John Bayne, Greg Cook and David Rush all had good runs and were unlucky to finish just outside the medals, an excellent run by Rushy on the last lap (31:19, 2nd fastest MM) not quite enough to oust Lake City Athletics from 3rd place.

Leith Senior Women. The Leith Women's team of Meredith Molloy, Merryn Greenwood, Sarah Bakler, Kirsty Morris, Sarah Thomas, Vivien Ayers, Alison Sargeant and Jan Craig finished in 12th place, the highlight being a Womens Masters 50+ record set by Viv on Lap 6 – a time of 32:24.



Some of the Leith contingent relax at the finish: Alison Sargeant, John Winsbury, Julian O'Hagan, Alan Funnell, Neale McLanachan and Grant McDougall (Photo: Julian O'Hagan).

Wanaka Wanders

Ed Stevens recently headed off for a Sunday run with a difference – up the Rob Roy Glacier Track from the West Matukituki Valley. He was accompanied by former Leith runner Paul Hellebrekers (see photo). The track can be reached from a bridge across the west branch of the Matukituki River and has recently been upgraded, making it excellent running terrain.

Ed has been working hard on forming the Wanaka branch of Leith, with Merryn Greenwood recently competing for Leith in the

National Road Relays women's team. Also keep a lookout for a half marathon event Ed is planning in Wanaka in 2008.



Paul Hellebrekers at the top of the Rob Roy Glacier track on just another Sunday run (Photo: Ed Stevens).

Ed (Stevens)'s Aspiring Ascent – 2-4 December 2007

The trip started at 7 am Sunday 2 December. Anton Wopereis picked me up from the Homestead and we travelled up the Matukituki Valley to Raspberry Flat, just under 1 hrs drive. We started walking at 8.10 am we reached Mt. Aspiring Hut in 1hr 50min another hour up to Shovel Flat then, Pearl Flat which is the start of the climb up to French Ridge Hut. Pearl Flat is about 580m. From Pearl Flat it is a hard climb up to French Ridge Hut at 1530m above sea level. Through the bush, the track is quite rough and steep, it opens up a bit towards the top but still quite steep climbing.

We reached French Ridge Hut in 6 hrs from Raspberry Flat. Had food and rest talked with other climbers in the hut and went to bed early as we are to get up at 1.30am to have breakfast and start ascent of Aspiring at 2.30am.



Mt Aspiring from Mt Roy, where Ed did a lot of training! (Photo: Ed Stevens).

We reached French Ridge Hut in 6 hrs from Raspberry Flat. Had food and rest talked with other climbers in the hut and went to bed early as we are to get up at 1.30am to have breakfast and start ascent of Aspiring at 2.30am.

The next day we were up at 1.30am had breakfast climbing by 2.30am. We climbed this section unroped wearing crampons assisted with ice axe and ski-pole. The first part of the climb was to the top of the Quarter Deck which rises to 2300m which took us about 2hrs 15 min this was in darkness with head lights. From here we had to traverse the Bonar Glacier. At this stage we were beginning to get some daylight. It wasn't that dark with reflection off the snow. The snow was very firm and enabled us to travel quite quickly. That was the whole idea of starting early in the morning so we would get frozen snow to travel over. During our traverse of the Bonar Glacier we had to cross a few crevasses, nothing too serious.

The next major obstacle was the Ramp which gives access to the final part of the climb. This is the steepest part of the ascent, you would not want to come unstuck on this part of the climb. The bottom of the Ramp is about 2100m rising to 2400m approx. We were roped up and Anton was leading out and I climbed with cover of the rope. It took six pitches before we were able to free climb just roped together using our crampons and ice tools, ice axe and hammer. We left our ski poles at the bottom of the Ramp. The hammer is used for hitting in snow stakes, the stakes are used as climbing anchors. After the six pitches

we were able to free climb to the top of the Ramp.

After safely reaching the top of the Ramp, it was a big slog to the summit. We still had very good snow conditions, however we had to negotiate some moraine and ice. We reached the top at 10.45am, eight and a quarter hours climbing. I had told Carol to be by the phone at 11am. I made a call at 10.50, yes, there is cellphone coverage at the top of Mt. Aspiring. I also gave my Mum a call as well. Yahoo!!! We were on the top, absolutely amazing, a very extraordinary feeling looking out over the vastness of this wilderness area. We could see Mt. Cook above other prominent peaks. Looking over the edge down the south face of Aspiring did give a weird feeling of insecurity. It was cold and quite windy on top and I could see the look on Anton's face that we needed to get off the summit. We took a few photos and it was now time for the descent.

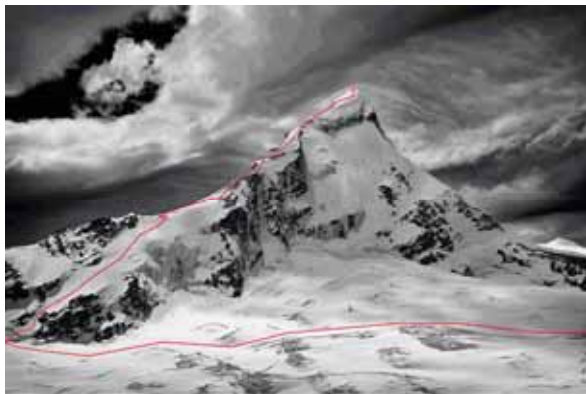
The first part of the descent to the bottom of the Ramp was just a matter of taking care of our footing, we were still roped together for safety. When we reached the top of the Ramp we had our lunch, first real food since we set off, I was starving.

We walked and down climbed the Ramp until it got very steep, (down climbing is when you face into the Mountain and use your crampon and ice tools and climb down backwards) then Anton lowered me over the six pitches that we made on the way up. Each pitch is a 60m rope length. The bottom of the Ramp is probably the most dangerous place of the whole climb. There was a crevasse that had to be negotiated that was a lot wider on the way down than on the way up. There was a lot of avalanche debris around which meant we pretty keen to get to hell out of there.

The day was now getting very warm. We now had about a 2.5 hr traverse of the Bonar Glacier. If you pick the wrong line you could end up taking hours longer negotiating crevasses. I couldn't believe the line Anton took, we virtually had a straight walk out to the top of the Quarter Deck. Crossing the Glacier the snow had got very soft which made the going very tough. We were having turns at leading and making a trail. The last part was up hill and I thought it was never

going to end. At this stage both of us were getting pretty tired.

The last part of the epic journey was to negotiate the Quarter Deck. It was quite quick after we had crossed the crevasse which is about third of the way down. At this stage the whole thing was becoming a reality. I couldn't believe we had travelled so far in one day. About three quarters the way down the Quarter Deck we stopped and took of our rope and crampons and virtually ran down the soft snow skiing and sliding all the way – over the last ridge and there was the welcome site of French Ridge Hut. Mission almost complete - fifteen and a quarter hours. A good night's sleep and then the next day the walk down French Ridge back to Raspberry Flat.



Mt Aspiring Ascent Sunday 3rd December 2007. Summit and descent from French Ridge Hut return 15hrs 15min. Guide: Anton Wopereis, and Ed Stevens.

I was surprised the next day that I felt so good. We sorted out our gear, had breakfast and headed off down French Ridge doing the climb down in about a hour and a half. We hoofed it all the way out to Raspberry flat and got back to the car at about 2.15pm. It took us five and a half hours to walk out. Before we started the trip Anton had hidden a couple of beers in the creek which we retrieved and enjoyed on our drive back to the Wanaka Homestead.

Footnote: Ed's guide, Anton Wopereis, died tragically while guiding a client on Mt Cook on New Year's Day 2008.

Next issue

- Summer track report
- Masters' Games
- Mountain Running

and more!

Remember, articles/photos for the next issue can be emailed to Andrew Lonie at alonie@doc.govt.nz or maps@paradise.net.nz

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