Vol. 2, Issue 3 AUTUMN 2023

LEITH LASSES

Leith Harrier and Athletic Club

Leith ~~is~~ was a club only for fast men! – The changing face of Leith Harrier and Athletic Club

A participant at 3 Peaks this year was humbled by her experience and commended us for such an inclusive environment for the event "I had always thought Leith was a club only for fast men" were her words to Race Director Steve Tripp.

Granted, several decades ago, Leith was indeed a club 'only for fast men' where, believe it or not, women were not permitted to register or run for the club – a story for another time! But fast forward to the 2020s and inclusivity seems to be the theme of Leith's unique approach to the local running community – and people love it!

At our recent AGM, our inclusivity permeated all presentations and discussions, perhaps this is our strong suite. By all accounts, we may be a small club of registered athletes, but our much bigger community following far outweighs us in size. "Punching above our weight" is a term all too often referred to Leith!

Looking ahead to the 2023 winter season we can only hope to forge ahead with our approach… so, come run with us!

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FLORIDER

I set out to ride this solo, as part of the Tour Aotearoa Brevet. Unfortunately I spent the first week in Auckland, waiting out the Cyclone Gabrielle. The cyclone meant I couldn't get up to Cape Reinga as planned. Instead, one day I rode as far North as I could get, Parakai (near Helensville), and began from there.

While I'd set off solo, I met so many really amazing, lovely, and generous people along the way. There were lots of other riders to talk to at almost every cafe or overnight stop, and at times I rode with them too. There were supporters along the way and one guy even pulled his car over and handed me a corona beer as I rode down off the last hill into Fox township!

The best thing about travelling by bike is that you can actually travel quite a long way each day. My longest day was 196km with some decent hills. Early on though, the distance was on my mind. It wasn't until I had cracked a particularly hard day of 140km, including 20km of "advanced mountain bike track" turned into a forestry logging mud bomb, that I started to believe that I could do this after all.

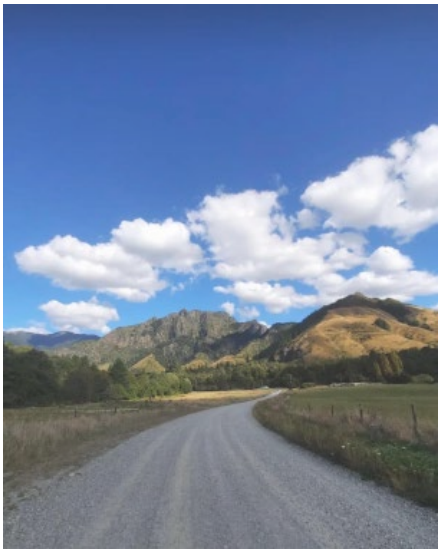
The worst thing about travelling by bike is that, unlike running, you have got three sets of contact points; hands, feet, and bottom! My hands suffered the most, especially on the rough tracks, as I had no front suspension. You can also fall off a bike, which I did a few times. And my bike broke down in the middle of nowhere! I'd learnt a few fixing tricks from the Crooked Spoke in Dunedin before I left, as mechanical issues had me worried - I knew nothing!

Florence Cycles New Zealand

F L O R I D E R

I've found it so empowering to know how to fix my own mode of transport, so I decided to pay it forward by raising money for the Crooked Spoke, they are fantastic.

https://givealittle.co.nz/cause/crooked-spoke-diy-bicycle-workshop



If you have some spare dollars or bike parts, please consider sending it Crooked Spoke's way!

Mechanical issues and cyclones aside, my actual lowlight was when I discovered I had been an all-night-buffet to bed bugs. I was bitten all over my hands, arms, shoulders, back - even an eyelid! The bites itched so bad for almost 2 weeks, despite antihistamines.

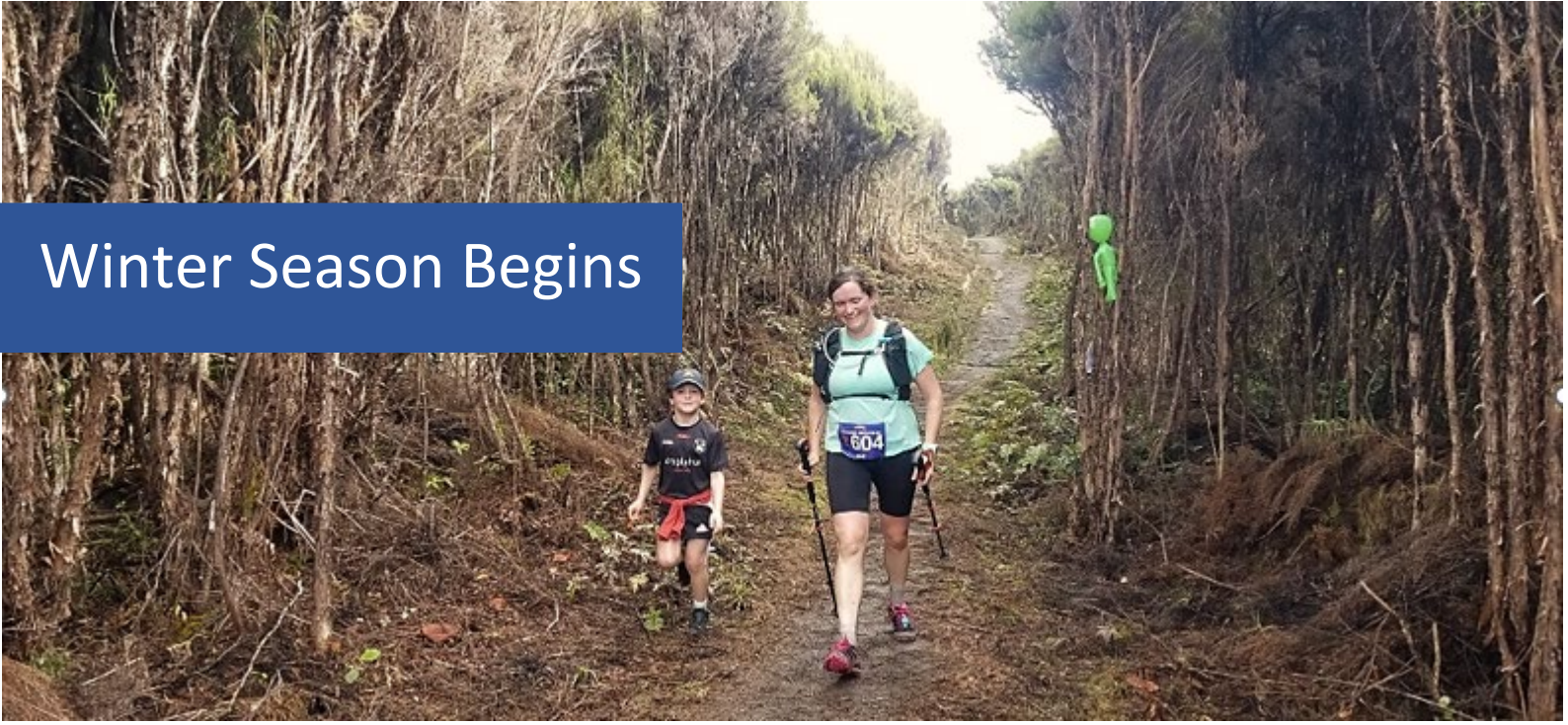
Luckily, I was headed to Wellington to spend the night with my folks. I spent my "rest day" washing all of my clothes and bug spraying my gear. I'm so lucky this happened just before I met my parents, I don't know how I would have coped without their support, help, and washing machine!

The South Island soon made up for the itchiness. My favourite bit of riding was the west coast wilderness trail. It reminded me of running/ tramping as you really are amongst the trees, as well as by the coast.

Would I do it again? Yes absolutely. I'm still not a cyclist. Biking is not my favourite activity but it's absolutely my new favourite way to travel!

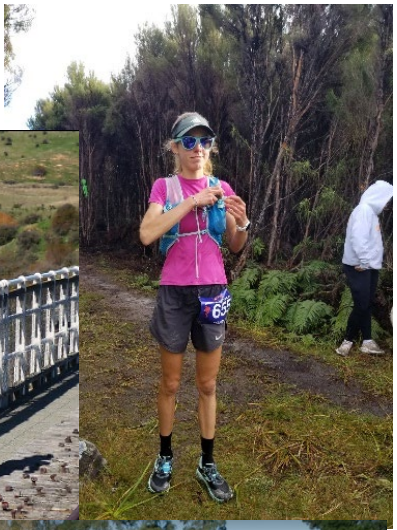
Check out Florence's Blog and social media here: https://dontgoagainsttheflo.wordpress.com

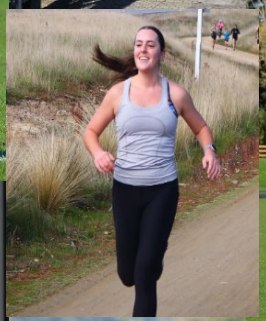
Florence Reynolds (@dontgoagainstheflo) • Instagram photos and videos

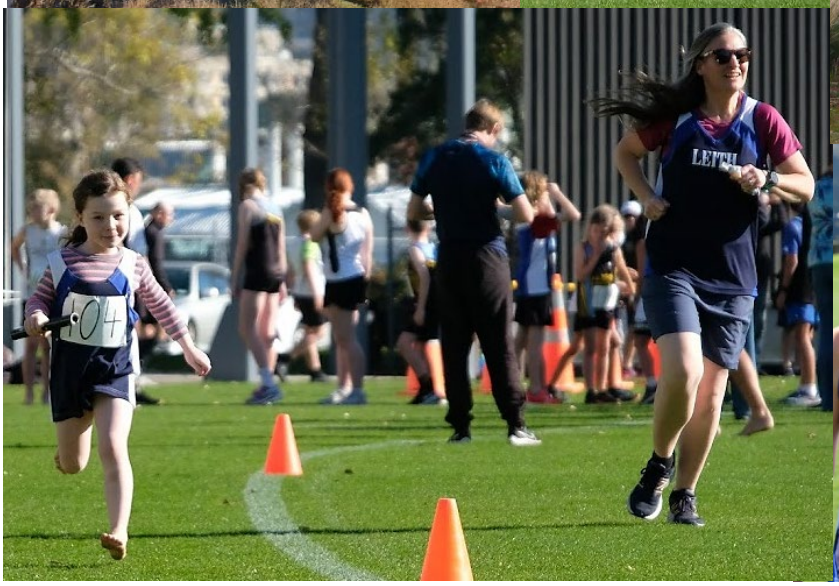


Winter Season Begins

Leith Lasses have jumped in to the 2023 winter season without hesitation, competing in 3 Peaks, Lovelock relays, Shunters & Grunters, Skedaddle, Leith Harbour Free, Rogaine, Northburn and more! Enjoy (just some) of the images of our Lasses at work!!







Is women's running *still* an act of defiance?

Granted, we've come a long way from the iconic 1960s image of Katherine Switzer being tackled by the Boston Marathon director in his hope to eject her from the prestigious race for simply being a women. But in the 2020s are women still facing prejudice and misogyny in the sport? A 2019 article by Author Rachel Hewitt "For women, running is still an act of defiance" takes a deep dive into the matter and examines where we are at, and the inequity women continue to face in the sport. Excerpts below give heed to the conversation:

6% of sports science studies between 2014 to 2020 were done on women!

In his memoir, "What I Talk About When I Talk About Running", novelist Haruki Murakami depicts long-distance running as a serious test of mental and physical endurance closely aligned with novel writing. But only the men in his book are up to the task. Its women, with their "blonde hair in a ponytail, and brand-new iPods" are "more mentally cut out for brief runs at high speed." "Still," Murakami consoles himself, "it's pretty wonderful to watch these pretty girls run."

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Most races are designed with men in mind. The 106-mile Ultra-Trail du Mont Blanc is one of the most famous and popular trail races in the world. Runners who achieve a rare, hard-won place and then develop an injury can defer to a later year. But female competitors who become pregnant or give birth are not offered a deferral and can obtain a refund only if the race occurs within 15 days of giving birth, after which women are considered to have returned to race form.

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Long-distance races usually set "cut-offs", by which runners must have passed certain points. At all levels, from amateur to elite, and at all distances, men's higher aerobic capacity, lower body fat, greater haemoglobin content and muscle mass, bigger hearts and larger proportion of fast-twitch muscles, make the average male runner around 10% quicker than the average female competitor (although this varies according to distance). So the more stringent the cut-off, the more disproportionately female competitors be timed out or deterred from entering.

. . .

Women's races are frequently accorded less time and/ or distance than men. Preventing women from running as far as men is partly the legacy of Victorian anxiety about women's lack of endurance, and partly based on "traditionalists'" argument that "women are not as fast" and require a shorter race "so that it takes the same amount of time". But, as campaigner Maud Hodson points out, women are not a third or half as slow as men, as the cropping of their races might suggest.

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This matters. It's important that women are included in running events, that the specificities of our bodies and lives are considered. The presence of other women in a run can offer a kind of solidarity, a diminished embarrassment derived from shared bodily experience, especially when it comes to the more intimate aspects of ultra-running, such as going to the toilet out in the open. Most importantly, running offers specific joys that are often missing from women's lives: a focus on strength and health and pleasure rather than thinness and acquiescence. We should not be denied these opportunities

Leith Lasses 2023 Competition update

Current top 10 in points competition standings as of 1 May 2023

LADS vs LASSES

Lads = 35.00

Lasses = 34.16

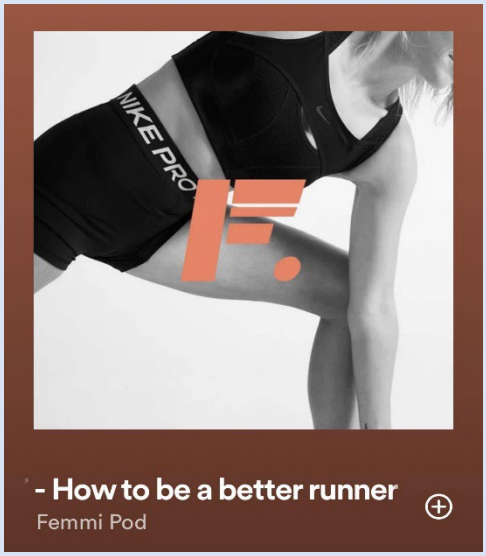
*The average points across all participants.

Leith HARRIER & ATHLETIC CLUB

Current Top 10 Leaderboard

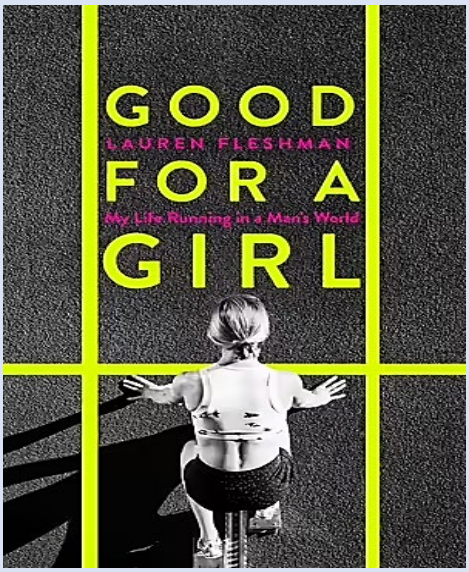
Lasses		Lads	
Margie C	77	Bryan S	79
Nina B	56	Don B	75
Angela B	52	Luke G	67
Claudia S	50	Dan H	47
Anna O	40	Richard C	42
Mandy L	36	Mark O'N	40
Rach M	34	Gavin C	37
Ruth J	34	Sandor T	36
Orlaith H	32	Corey L	32
Myrthe & Yvonne	31	Steve T	29

Worth a Listen



- How to be a better runner
Femmi Pod

Worth a read



Healthy Kiwi muffins

As winter fruit comes into season, the hallowed Kiwifruit with potent benefits to runners becomes a staple in a runner's fruit bowl. If you find yourself with excess or just want a twist on the zingy favourite, try this recipe!

2 cups All-purpose flour

1/2 cup Rolled Oats

1/3 cup White Sugar

1/3 cup Brown Sugar

2 tsp Baking soda

1/2 tsp Ground cinnamon

1/2 tsp Ground nutmeg

1/2 tsp Salt

1 cup Yogurt

1/2 cup Vegetable oil

2 eggs

1 1/2 tsp Vanilla extract

1/2 tsp Almond extract

1 1/2 cups Kiwifruit peeled, chopped and sliced

Preheat oven to 180 degrees Celsius and line a 12-cup muffin tin.

Whisk flour, rolled oats, sugars, baking soda, spices and salt together.

Whisk yogurt, oil, eggs, and extracts together in separate bowl until smooth.

Stir wet mixture into dry ingredients until combined, then fold in 1 cup of chopped kiwi.

Spoon evenly into muffin tin and top muffins with a slice of kiwi fruit

Bake for 20-25 minutes.

Leith Committee 2023

President: Chris Sole
Vice-President: Lydia Pattillo
Secretary: Rach McKinney
Treasurer: Greg Johnston

Men's Captain: Richard Campbell
Women's Co-Captains: Florence Reynolds & Claudia Sole
Trail & Ultra Captain: Chris Bisley
Track & Field Captain: Marc Boullé

Delegate to Track & Field: Marc Boullé
Delegate to Cross-Country: Margaret Knox
Delegate to Masters: Christine Montgomery

3 Peaks Committee: Steve Tripp (Director), Mark O'Neill, Siobhan McKinlay, Gaya Gnanalingam

Leith Harrier & Athletic Club
Dunedin, New Zealand