

ROUND AND ROUND AND ROUND...

Four teams of five runners set out from Milford at 6 pm on October 27 1962 to circle Lake Pupuke in an anti-clockwise direction for 24 hours, with the objective being to cover at least 180 miles for a trophy donated by Irvin and Stern Ltd. The event was organized by Takapuna Harrier Club with Calliope competing by invitation. Laurie Vincent started for the club by running non-stop for two and three quarter hours while the Takapuna A team began with short fast laps that took it into a one lap lead over Calliope. Unfortunately after eleven hours the Takapuna team was forced to withdraw as three of its runners were incapable of continuing. Among them were a sprinter, a novice of one week's training and a runner of six weeks' standing. Calliope with a team of seasoned harriers ignored the thunderstorms and frequent squalls and glided on, each of the runners continuing to cover two to two and three quarter hour laps. The miles rolled away behind them. By 8 am Takapuna B, who were running shorter distances per man, had crept up on Calliope, and a change of tactics was necessary. Shorter runs of one mile each saw Calliope move to a comfortable lead of three and a half miles by midday and they increased this lead to the finish. Lloyd Darroch remembers that towards the end they started doing bursts of half a mile each to improve the average. The well-chosen team of marathon runners who represented Calliope was John Henderson, Laurie Vincent, Barry Jones, Keith Stone, and Gary Allott. They covered a remarkable 221 miles 1719 yards, (nearly 62 laps), almost seven miles ahead of the Takapuna B team who battled on well despite losing one man. The average mile rate was 6m 25s. It was reported that the runners covered 45 miles each, expended about enough energy to lift an ocean liner one foot off the ground and lost about half a stone each in weight.

In 1981 Calliope had the bright idea of resurrecting the 24-hour relay event round the same course, confident that they had the team to repel all others. A magnificent total of 13 teams, each of six runners, lined up for the 1 pm start from Takapuna Baths on April 14. Calliope had no fewer than thirty three starters, assembled into five teams (three were in a composite team). The relay was sponsored by Enterprise Sports of Birkenhead. In what proved to be the most titanic struggle ever witnessed on the North Shore, Calliope A won the 24-hour race by only 27 seconds from a gallant Pakuranga. All teams started

with two-lap segments per man, and after six hours Calliope had a 6m 21s lead. Pakuranga then started running one 3.6 mile lap per man and by 5 am they led by 1m 47s. Six hours to run and Calliope were ahead again by six minutes. At 8.45 Calliope started sprinting one kilometer sections. They shot to a 14 minute lead. Pakuranga did the same, and then started sprinting in 200 or 300 metre bursts. Calliope's lead was chopped to 43 seconds and it was panic stations! Frantic 200 metre repetitions saw Calliope finally home, but only just. The mighty Calliope team was Trevor Mouldy, Robert Joy, Peter Forbes, Murray Glen, Dai Martin and Rod Barker. They had covered 69 laps, a total of 248.7 miles or 400.2k in 23 hours 59 m 21s at an average mile rate of 5m 47s. Pakuranga was only 150 metres behind. Third was the Police Task Force team who covered a most respectable 61 laps (220 miles) to win the Calliope Inter-service team trophy. Calliope veterans did brilliantly to reach 60 laps (216 miles) and Calliope women's team ran an excellent race to win their section by covering 55 laps (198 miles). Mention has to be made of Calliope E team. Consisting solely of sprinters they had dropped with fatigue by daybreak. A timekeeper heroically filled in by running a lap for them but found them still sound asleep at 5.30 am. He let sleeping jogs lie. Calliope teams not named so far were: Calliope B – S Morgan, C Watt, P Taylor, R Kemp, T Krebensen, J Lewis 7th (6th in Grade) 57laps; Calliope C – C W Fell, B McLean, M Stevens, J Gaeta, F King, R Tricker (veterans team) 4th (1st in Grade) 60 laps; Calliope D – S King, C Evans, H Gaeta, P Brunker, L Rogers, K Peters (women's team) 10th (1st in Grade) 55 laps; Calliope E – G Anderson, L Anderson, J De Bounevialle, C Kawe, S Shaffe, S Lush 13th (7th in Grade) 38 laps. Calliope runners in the Bitzers team were L Smith, D Townsend and G Davies.

Two years later all thoughts of pain, tiredness and fatigue had vanished, but the excitement and challenge of the event remained. Time for another contest! Sponsored again by Enterprise Sports and conducted again by Calliope, 16 teams lined up on March 26th 1983, at the Takapuna Baths, Killarney Street, and were sent on their way at 1 pm. Race manager was Steve Lee and the judge Murray Glen. A large contingent of other Calliope officials was on hand to ensure the smooth running of the event. The big change from 1981 was that runners were not allowed to be moved around the course by car (the

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frenetic antics of 1981 were just too dangerous). The ban meant runners were virtually limited to a minimum 1000 metres if the six were spaced around the 5.8k course. To add colour to the event Gary Regteim was to attempt to regain the 24-hour road running record he had had taken off him by a Frenchman the previous year. His target was 262.42 km. Joe Mathews was also attempting the 24-hour run.

Favourite for the event was Takapuna number one team with many sub 2hr 40m marathon runners in its ranks. Calliope had just one team but it was a strong one. Takapuna made an early break by running their six members over 1000 metre stretches for the first four hours to be a lap up on Calliope. By the early hours of the morning they had stretched their lead to two laps and thereafter were unthreatened, covering 69 laps in 23hr 45m 53s, 13 minutes faster than Calliope's 1981 time, and so a record. The Takapuna team was R Diamond, D Hill, H Cunningham, S Bartley, G Stanley and H Ditchburn. Otahuhu moved through in the latter stages to complete 67 laps and to break the Shore domination. Calliope held on well for third, completing 64 laps in 23 hr 40m 28s. Calliope's team was Robert Joy, John Gaeta, Rod Barker, Peter Forbes,

Bill Fell and Scott Thomson. Gary Regteim withdrew after covering 155.6k in 14 hours in order to save himself for another attempt "but not on footpaths like these". Regteim was not on pace and it did not help that he had had bottles thrown at him. Joe Mathews battled on to complete 219.8k in the 24 hours. A footnote of interest is that former Calliope star Sharon King, running for a composite team, maintained a strong pace throughout the event to give some of the "A" team contestants a run for their money.

These 24-hour events necessitated a large-scale involvement by many club members and associates who had to supply each of the runners with food, drink and support both mental and physical. Detailed lap-by-lap records also had to be kept. But everyone enjoyed taking part. Calliope has not held another 24-hour event and with the big increase in traffic volumes it would not be able to do so again on the Lake Pupuke circuit. They were great experiences, not only engendering lots of excitement but also strengthening ties and club spirit within the whole of Calliope.



*Calliope's mighty 1981 24-hour relay team:
T. Mouldey, P. Forbes, M. Glen, D. Martin, R. Joy, R. Barker*