

## **2013 Forest Lake Metrogain/Strollergain – Wrap-up Report**

Early in 2013 my sister's son was picked in the Under 15 Australian Futsal team to tour Brazil in the middle of the year. Given she has two brothers who are avid rogainers (when their bodies are working), she decided she should run a metrogain to do some fundraising. Her words at the time were "I've either had a flash of brilliance, or a really idiotic idea."

Given we both work in our family's childcare business, we decided to run a variation on the traditional metrogain. To be eligible for the major prize, you had to have a child under 5 in a stroller for the entire race. Again, brilliant or idiotic, I'm still not sure.

One of our childcare centres is based at Forest Lake. Having done lunchtime training around the area, I knew it would be perfect for a metrogain, but now I had to pull everything together in a limited time frame.

Being our first rogaine, we made some, ummmmm....., non-optimal decisions. Leaving 30 minutes between map handout and the start of the race really didn't leave enough time for the novice and full briefing. So although I like the idea of short map planning times, 30 minutes was a bit too short.

But the race started only 1 minute late and the teams were off, disappearing quickly into the distance. Forest Lake is a wonderful area for rogaing because of the number of parks and the footpaths linking them together. When I went for a drive around the suburb, I saw hardly any teams on the roads.

It was a beautiful day. The sky was bright blue, with a gentle wind and pleasant, moderate temperature during the race. The teams would be able to push hard without worrying about overheating, and those that wanted to stop during the race for a picnic had plenty of beautiful spots to choose from.

### **Challenges**

We decided to have 3 challenge checkpoints and two "find the location" checkpoints. I would have liked more, but was short of volunteers and planning time. The sudoku was particularly challenging, with one team deciding it wasn't worth their time to do it. Matching sticks was sometimes easy, sometimes hard, and depended more on luck than skill. However the sideshow alley was the hit of the day. It looked deceptively easy. Just throw some balls into some pockets and catch some ducks with a fishing line. Very easy..... Or maybe not.....

Most teams got through fairly quickly, with a few having a bit more of a challenge.

The find the person checkpoint was a little more difficult. These were planned to make the course a bit more difficult for any fast teams as they would have to come back to the centre of the map, next to the hash house twice, once 30 minutes after the start, and one more time an hour later. In the end, most people went for the checkpoints that were clearly marked on the map.

Checkpoint 93. A Michael Hill employee will be waiting at the very last bus stop for route 463. He is meeting a friend that left Goodna train station on the 463 at 2:32. This was 2:59pm at Forest Lake Shops – just north of checkpoint 34.

Checkpoint 94. At 3:52, a Michael Hill Employee will be trying to catch the 100 bus into the city at bus stop 010803. This was at the eastern end of Grand Avenue – just south of checkpoint 34.

### **Other checkpoints**

The course was a question and answer format. Each checkpoint had a question with a multiple choice answer - A, B or C. Correct answers get the points. Wrong answers get negative TRIPLE points

Unfortunately our answer sheet showed the wrong answer for checkpoint 84. Luckily correcting this the next day didn't change any of the placings, and helped nearly everyone's scores improve.

The questions were not meant to be tricky. Get to the right location and the answer was there.

However checkpoint 61 was accidentally a little harder. The clue was "What colour is the pipe sticking out of the weir (dirt path links to the weir)". The photo below was taken from on top of the weir, and you can see the small white pipe sticking out of the weir at the bottom right of the photo. You can also see the great big black pipe running across the creek downstream of the weir. Unless you followed the dirt path down to the weir, the white pipe was barely visible from the concrete footpath most of the teams followed to that point. The black pipe was within the checkpoint circle on the map, albeit to the side.



Out of 18 teams that answered the question, 9 correctly answered white and 9 answered black. I have decided not to award points for answering black, as the description was clear. However given the teams had obviously navigated to within the circle (the main objective), neither will they be penalised with negative points for answering black.

The above photo is from one of the bushier parts of the course, but still there is a house only 20 metres away off to the left of the photo.

### **Winners**

The winners of the stroller category were Tony, Melissa and Alysia Bowman with 1230 points.

The overall winners and men's team winners were Justin Smart and Frazer Mullunded with 1600 points.

Robyn and Guy Rutherford won the mixed category with 1540 points and Laura Grogan and Gillian Herriot won the women's.

Thanks to all my volunteers who vetted, did admin, ran checkpoints, cooked meals and generally helped out on the day.

Thanks also the sponsors for providing the great prizes and particularly to Building Futures Montessori Childcare for providing the location, food and lots of other support.

Derek McKinnon