

Hi Karen,

Well what an exciting run this was! We had no idea what to expect before hand as the run hadn't been done before and they didn't have maps or a course advertised until very late – and as I didn't know the area at all I didn't pay too much attention. It started off in a freezing cold frosty field where the sun didn't get to, after a whole 20 meters of flat we hit the hills – and they went on and on and on!! The first part was on an old railway so the track was wide and quite well graded, just steep. It took about half an hour to get out in to the sunshine and it was only then that my feet started to defrost. At about the 7km marker we finally got to a point where the short course went off the main track and went downhill (the long course continued uphill ☺). The downhill was so much fun – it looked as if they'd hacked out a track from the bush just the day before. There was no way that you could run fast, it was a narrow, steep, slippery, muddy tiny little trail – a killer on the quad muscles! It was great to be running this with Maree as we laughed and joked the whole way down this – and I managed to get a couple of snaps of her, one where she was slipping on the track. At this point we entered the Brook Valley sanctuary, which is located in the old Nelson water works. The last 6 – 7 kms was run through the sanctuary and it was lovely. The tracks are all fairly new so quite rough underfoot. Once again we hit some pretty gnarly uphill – rough narrow tracks with drop offs on one side. Through here the uphill reduced you to a crawl. And then there were the river crossings! I thought they were joking when we were told at the briefing that there were thigh deep river crossings – but sadly they weren't. They weren't big rivers really, but very very cold especially when there's no sun getting on to them.

At the last river crossing we were told it was all downhill from here – never believe someone when they tell you that..... With legs that had been smashed on the hills and slight incline becomes a massive hill.

The run was supposed to be 13km but ended up closer to 14 with just over 1000m of height gain.

Would I have done it if I'd know it would be so hard? Probably not.

Would I do it again? Definitely!

