

The Frontrunner Three Peaks Race 2013

21 April 2013

Stafford Thompson emerged as the comfortable winner of the gruelling but scenic 26km Three Peaks Mountain run, having battled the cold, as well as the strong and wet north easterlies and sometimes slippery conditions. After the race, the ODT online news reporter

Wayne Parsons interviewed Thompson who had suffered a fall coming off the Cargill walkway, about 3km from the finish line, and was later diagnosed with two broken bones in his arm. Excerpts from the interview: *"Thompson (32), a physiotherapy clinical adviser, made his first appearance on the course since winning the event in 2005. "That was cold, muddy and hard, the coldest run I have ever had" he said after crossing the finish of the 26km race over the peaks of Flagstaff, Swampy and Mt Cargill. Thompson, who was returning to the sport after three years as a ranked distance runner that culminated in him winning the national marathon title in 2007, has found renewed enthusiasm for running after a break for family and work commitments. A brief move to Australia after his 2007 national marathon success was backed up with victories in the Townsville marathon and Mt Isa half-marathon, before he returned to Dunedin and gave the shoes a rest. His approach to training is completely different from what it was six years ago. He now works his training around family before going for late-evening runs, and is enjoying a much more relaxed approach. "I just do it for fun now. I don't take it too seriously." This approach saw him feeling "really strong after the start", and deciding to go with it. He reached the top of Flagstaff in 56min and held a 3min lead at Swampy." This approach saw him feeling "really strong after the start", and deciding to go with it. He reached the top of Flagstaff in 56min and held a 3 minute lead at Swampy. Thompson continued to distance himself from the remainder of the field, overcoming a wind chill that plummeted temperatures into the negative on his run over Mt Cargill, before getting some respite on the run down to Bethunes Gully and the finish at Chingford Park."*

Thompson ended up winning in a time of 2hrs 06mins 53secs from second placed Phil Novis who was second in the Open Men's grade in 2hrs 15mins 34secs. The next to finish was the men's team of David Catherwood and Richard Olsen which ran the distance in a combined time of 2hrs 18mins 59secs. Fourth across the line was Jason Palmer (3rd Open Men's grade) in 2hrs 19mins 52secs. The mixed team of Victoria Beck and Matt Bixley was fifth across the line in a record time of 2hrs 21mins 11secs. The first master men's 35-49 runner was Stewart Paul who was the seventh individual runner across the line in 2hrs 24mins 13secs. The first Master Men's 50+ athlete was Rene Aarsen who finished in 2hrs 37mins 10secs.

Wayne Parsons from the ODT also interviewed Louisa Andrew after her excellent first place finish as first woman overall *"Defending champion Louisa Andrew dominated the field to retain the women's title in 2hrs 33mins 43secs (she was also the first in the Master Women's 35-49 grade). "That was tough," Andrew said at the finish. "But I'd rather have that than the 34degC we had on the Peninsula Challenge a couple of years ago." Andrew (39), a horse dentist, has build a remarkable record for off-road running. "I just enjoy running this course. You never know what it's going to throw up."* Second in the women's section was Tamsyn Hayes (first Open Women's runner 20-34 grade) in 2hrs 45mins 52secs, while in third place was Thompson's wife, Bridget, in 2hrs 47mins 50secs. The first master women's 50+ athlete was Marie Marshal who finished in 3hrs 38mins.

11km "Race the Summit" and 11km Walk 21 April 2013

Neale McLanachan was the inaugural winner of the brand new Race the Summit 11km race. He raced to the summit of Swampy in 1hr 2mins 12secs. A close second was Peter Fitzgerald in 1hr 3mins 57secs. Third was Robert Homan 1hr 14mins 48secs. The first woman and Open Woman winner was Lydia McLean in 1hr 30mins 43secs. David Scobie was the first walker finishing in a fast 1hr 43mins 47secs.