



# CASE STUDY

## **PARKRUN**

Hatea Harriers embrace the recreational running market as parkrun provides



After seeing the growth in recreational running, and the boom in participation running events, Hatea Harriers wanted to take a proactive approach to engaging non-club runners. This is when the idea of establishing a parkrun came up. By partnering with the well-established event provider, being lucky enough to get the Mayor of Whangarei on board and with the backing of the club, it has so far been a huge success for all involved.

In February 2016, we hosted our first parkrun with the help of parkrun NZ, it now averages over 40 participants per run, a number which is steadily climbing as more and more people show up each week.

## CHALLENGES



### TIME

Declining numbers turning up to our weekly runs as the time was not always convenient for all. Some members were not renewing after a summer without club activity (there wasn't activities offered all year round).

### VOLUNTEERS

Finding the volunteers for key committee roles in particular those who had the administrative skills to organise the runs and ensure events are thoroughly thought out.

### MEMBERS

Knowing how to attract new members in a competitive market. A lot of potential members turn to free or pay-as-you-go running groups. Also engaging our current members throughout the year.

## SOLUTION



Parkrun is now what we as a club do on a Saturday morning. parkrun is a free to enter, timed 5km run. It is open to everyone and we've seen over the first year that the non-competitive aspect of the programme appeals to both non-club and club runners. It is not only a way to engage with the huge recreational running market, but gets people out, active and enjoying our great parks. The morning parkrun is convenient for club members who have the rest of the day to socialise with one another and plan the following weeks run. It is a goal the whole club has come together to achieve, from our volunteer administrators to our very best runners and everyone in between. There is something in it for everyone.

## RESULTS



- There were very few barriers, nothing that we couldn't easily get around.
- Participation is growing each week both in the club and the parkrun event.
- Challenging our current members in more ways than one
- Members are more invested in the running of the club
- We are now seen as local "go getters", an attractive prospect for a club trying to grow

## ◀ CONCLUSION ▶

Because we were instrumental in setting up Whangarei parkrun, we have attracted new runners to our club, provided our members with something they can do all year round and at a time of day that suits their needs/wants. Being the Whangarei parkrun Run Directors has challenged our members in more ways than one, they are now more invested in all aspects of the club and it has provided them with an insight into administration which they might never have achieved.

I would say "go for it", your club will have the administrative experience to set it all up and you will be surprised at the interest in running that you will create. It's going to attract newcomers to our sport and they will see your club as the next step forward.