

Cassells Kernahan – Athletics Canterbury Merit Award 2019

I find it intriguing, researching what some of our members have done. This recipient I had great difficulty finding information on. Of course, that in no way diminishes this honour.

1944 was the first full scale athletics season since the beginning of the war. Rugby Park Meetings were in full swing. A year later, 1945 this recipient won the 3 mile at the New Zealand University Tournament. This resulting in him winning a NZ University Blue and a Canterbury University College Blue. There are some in this room who have University Blues and understand their standing in sport.

He was in the 1947 Men's Takahe to Akaroa team which I hate to say came 2nd to the Christchurch Club team (nothings changed, those here from ChCh Avon might say). He was again in the Master's team for the 1980 Takahe to Akaroa team again University were 2nd to Christchurch, but in that 33 years on they were 7 minutes faster. Something I think would be, that in 1980 the course was sealed.

After University, he travelled and worked in South Africa. We are not sure for how long he was there.

He was an Official at the 1974 Commonwealth Games in Christchurch and was a Track Judge at the 1981 Pacific Conference Games also in Christchurch.

He was the President of the University of Canterbury Cross Country club from 1981 until 1983 and subsequently made a Life Member of that club.

He competed at the 1982 NZ Masters Championships in Invercargill, placing 2nd in the 400m, 800m, 1500m and 3rd in the 200m. He was also 2nd in the veteran's 55 grade at the National Cross Country Championships.

After a heart attack curtailed his running he took to being an official fulltime. He is always there rain hail or shine, whether it down at QEII Park, Rawhiti Domain and more recently as a 90 year old at Nga Puna Wai and just last week timekeeping at the Christchurch Secondary Schools Road champs. He must be one of if not the longest serving Time Keeper at the Annual Takahe to Akaroa Relay and officiates regularly at all Cross Country and Road Committee events.

At 93 he has some excuse for not being here tonight, but he is officiating at tomorrow's Jane Patterson Cross Country Races at the Rawhiti Domain and it will be there that we will present this award.

So it with great pleasure that we present this award to Cassells Kernahan.

Now if you are at Rawhiti Domain tomorrow, please don't whisper a word.