

Spring Challenge 2017!

Four months ago I signed up for something that I knew was going to push me physically and mentally. I signed up with my two other team mates for the Spring Challenge 9hr in Geraldine. Luckily for me my team mates were experienced multi-sporters, while I am a bit of a weekend warrior who loves biking and walking. Here is the description that was on the Spring Challenge website “**9-hour (advanced)** – The epic version of the Spring Challenge, expect a mission! *Time range 9 to 20-hours.*” What was I thinking!!!!

With busy lives of work and family we managed to get in a couple of good days of training which involved 55km of biking and 15km hiking. With the horrible winter we had in Canterbury I spent a lot of time walking in the rain and training on the bike in the garage on the indoor trainer, not much fun.

September 30th was race day, the alarm went off at 4:30 in the morning for a drive to the start line which was 45 min away. First up was rafting which involved a 1km run in our wetsuits to rafts waiting to take us 10km down the river. This was the relaxing part of the day, but I wish I had started the push ups to strengthen the arms, as by the end of it they were burning from paddling. Off the rafts for a quick change into our hiking gear for a 15km hike to 1,311 metres above sea level to the summit of Little Mt Peel. Let’s just say there was nothing little about it. After 76 teams follow a muddy track up it became really boggy with us walking in mud that was up to our shins in parts. Walking up was fine, it was the down that was hard by the time your shoes were covered in mud and with no grip, it was like walking on ice.

The next transition was from hiking to our mountain bikes. The night before at the race briefing we were told that they had to extend the MTBing section as one of the rivers was too high to cross, so they added on another 27km of biking to make this section 67km, with two rather big hills to climb. This is where I had to have a wee word to myself to stop the negative thoughts and replace it with positive, I had to make it to the finish!!! With tears in my eyes we made it to the last transition and it was back into our running shoes for a 4km orienteering course around Geraldine. I managed to find my second wind as I knew my family was waiting for me at finish line. Thanks to the amazing orienteering skills of my team mates we finished this stage without any glitches and it was the run to the finish line. This was the highlight of the day for me, as I got to run through the finish line not only with my team mates but with my 5 year old daughter, it was magic!

Our race time was 12hrs and 40min. This had us finish in mid field, which I am rather proud of being the weekend warrior that I am.

<https://www.springchallenge.co.nz/>