

2004 Results

The previous year Chris Booth ran 2.40.15 for second place in the Ascot Park Hotel Marathon from Riverton to Invercargill but was not particularly happy about it. Chris prefers wins to seconds and he just missed a share of the \$500 incentive bonus that goes to all Southlanders going under 2.40. (Winner Barry Ledington went under and had the \$500 all to himself). This year Booth wanted the win, the Southland championship that goes with it and the sub 2.40 time. While training has been down and his competitive record a bit short of races, Booth is still a class act (PB 2.31.05) and outright favourite for the race. He started out strong, was on target at half way but somewhere around 30km the flu bugs that had been lurking around his system took over and Chris was even less happy than he was last year. In fact, highly annoyed would be closer to the mark as he was forced to give it away.

But Booth's bad luck was someone else's good luck.

As Booth was some 15 to 20 minutes ahead of anyone else, his withdrawal was unknown to the rest of the field. Invercargill runner Les Cooper thought he was battling Garth Fairbairn, Tyrone Lake and Nigel Marsh for second prize. Cooper must have been suspicious when he entered Surrey Park to a level of applause usually reserved for race winners, and it wasn't until he crossed the line that he learnt he had won.

Admittedly, the time was not that flash – 3.02.25 – but a win is a win. And Les Cooper goes down in the record books as such. Garth Fairbairn trailed the leader by 2 mins for second and Tyrone Lake came home third in 3.11.33. All three place getters plus the next two of Nigel Marsh (3.14.20) and Stuart Cottam (3.15.36) were using the marathon as a prelude to the Kepler Challenge four weeks later, which explains why they were not prepared to run themselves into the ground.

New Zealand 100km champion and world W50 100km silver medallist Val Musket was first woman with a time of 3.32.41

Marathon Men

Les Cooper	3.02.25
Garth Fairbairn	3.05.00
Tyrone Lake	3.11.33

Half Marathon Men

Adrian Bailey	1.10.36
Simon Crosby	1.13.48
Hugh Allison	1.17.48

Marathon Women

Val Muskett	3.22.41
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Half Marathon Women

Leeanne Durry	1.22.39
Jeanette White	1.29.34