

WATER WORLD GREAT OCEAN RUN 2009
(from Red Rock to Coffs Jetty, 19 April, 2009)

Stephen Sayers posted his third victory in this year's Water World Great Ocean Run from Red Rock to Coffs Harbour Jetty on Sunday. Although fifteen minutes slower than his time when he finished as runner-up last year his time of 3.41.16 left him well clear of his pursuers at journey's end. Only two other runners were able to dip under the 4 hour mark for the 45 kilometres trek along the windswept Coffs Coast beaches. Coffs local, Warren Turner had the legs at the end to hold off Armidale's Michael Smart by nine seconds, 3.57.09 to 3.57.18.

Earlier while Sayers had battled the wind on his own Turner had had the company of another run first-timer Scott Thomson from Bellingen while Smart had been accompanied by Gold Coaster David Loader. The storm beaches between North Sapphire and Diggers re-arranged things somewhat with a variety of options being used to complete that section of the run.

The women's race was less clear-cut with Yvla Kendrick finishing strongly to hold out previous winner, Penny Burgess who had Sherida McKean as company throughout eventually tying as runners-up.

Amongst the first time runners was the second youngest to attempt the feat Lyle Mayes from Safety Beach who at sixteen completed the distance in fine style in 5.15.22 to place eighth despite not having run further than 11 kms previously. He has plenty of time to chase the run record still held by Jim Bennington at 3.18.15.

While numbers were down on last year's record of 65 entries and 63 finishers the fact that 41 individuals completed the course in the very trying conditions was testimony to their commitment. Also pleasing for the organizers from the W.R.A.T.S. was the participation of two teams, one of two men from Caboolture, Steve Hayes and Mark Parsonson, whilst the all-ladies team of three was more local with Sue Duncan of Yamba combining with Woolgoolga's Tina Benoit and Nicole Johnstone. The team concept had been floated previously but this was the first time it had become a reality.

With a large number of first-timers joining the crew who make this event an annual pilgrimage the 'war stories' being swapped at the post-run function at the Yacht Club should see further growth of the event if not in numbers at least in reputation as not only one of the most scenic but also one of the toughest short Ultras on the calendar.

RESULTS.

MALE – Stephen Sayers 3.41.16, 1; Warren Turner 3.57.09, 2; Michael Smart 3.57.18, 3; Scott Thomson 4.01.07, 4; David Loader 4.06.44, 5; Kelvin Marshall 4.31.37, 6; Jim Bennington 4.59.00, 7; Lyle Mayes 5.15.22, 8; 'Bomber' Hutchinson 5.17.29, 9; John Rose 5.18.54, 10; Peter McKenzie & Geoff Last 5.20.01, =11; Joe Mollica 5.37.21, 13; Bob Beer 5.39.59, 14; Damon Palliser 5.42.09, 15; Neil Burgess 5.47.58, 16; Chris Cohen 6.06.12, 17; Russ Smith 6.06.13, 18; Michael Wright 6.08.39, 19; Gary Barton 6.10.24, 20; Garry Sayers 6.11.44, 21; Bob Miller 6.14.52, 22; Peter Moore, Peter Gardiner & Mal Draper 6.19.45, =23; Bob Jones 6.37.21, 26; Tony Smith 7.13.06, 27; Tom Holbut 8.47.59, 28; Paul Chamberlain 9.43.06, 29.

FEMALE – Yvla Kendrick 5.22.15, 1; Penny Burgess & Sherida McKean 5.31.11, 2; Tina Thompson 6.20.47, 3; Kelly Groves 6.25.12, 4; Julie Watson 6.28.31, 5; Robina Unwin & Anne Grundy 7.08.46, =6; Di Miller 7.23.31, 8; Di Keever 7.25.18, 9; Elly Chamberlain 8.00.16, 10; Robin Barker & Mimi Parfitt 9.43.45, =11.

TEAMS – Ladies (3) – Sue Duncan, Tina Benoit, Nicole Johnstone 5.14.35, 1.

Men (2) – Steve Hayes, Mark Parsonson 4.04.29, 1.

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