

Nomination for the NZRA Outstanding Community Recreation Programme 2010

Category: Outstanding Community Recreation Programme 2010

Organisation: Tiddlers Multisport Trust

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Nominated completed by: Vivien McCaskey

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Project Name: Tiddlers Multisport (Trust)

INTRODUCTION:

Tiddlers Multisport was created for the purpose of encouraging young children to participate in activity through racing in a fun, enjoyable way. Initially this concept took shape from my young children watching me enter my first triathlon two years ago and wanting to experience something similar. My children were 3 and 5 years old. Looking into opportunities within Christchurch I was disappointed to find that there was nothing at all for this age group. The yearly Bike Jam considered 5 year old children too young and the annual Weetbix Triathlon only accepted children from seven years. With this in mind I decided to create my own race by borrowing some equipment from the local triathlon club and holding a small duathlon at a local park. I approached the 5yr olds from my son's class and pre-schoolers from my daughters pre-school. The fee was \$2 to enter and by the following week I had thirteen young children lined up at the start line, (consisting of the family gazebo and a large piece of cardboard hanging off the front with "Finish" painted on it and some balloons). The race took two hours to set up and two minutes to complete! (Attachment A).

The following week I was approached by parents from my son's school asking if I would be running another race because they heard it was a lot of fun. I thought "why not". I booked the next race date, dropped off flyers to some local primary schools and the following week I had 70 children entered to the next Tiddlers duathlon - Tiddlers was born! Three months later I planned the next Tiddlers triathlon consisting of run, bike, bouncy castle and 200 children registered. The following race attracted 320 children aged between two and seven years.

Tiddlers races are now planned for the beginning of each school term, being four per year and we regularly have 300 children participating between the ages of two and seven years. In the summer months we add a wet section and gloop slide after the bouncy castle for some added fun!

Who else in our community?...disabled, special needs and troubled children. How can Tiddlers help? My focus is to now incorporate these children into our races. This is something I have become quite passionate about and have started working alongside several special needs groups in Christchurch to encourage and invite them to participate in our future events.

Long term vision – I can see that Tiddlers could become nationalised through primary schools, or in lower resourced regions where there is very little available for young families.

INNOVATION:

Tiddlers Multisport events have become successful quickly with families coming from as far away as Ashburton and Timaru to participate because they are fun and there is nothing like Tiddlers in New Zealand. There is a huge need for activity and fun sporting events designed for the younger children's market. Tiddlers fill this void perfectly and this is testament to the number of children participating regularly at our events even in the rain. Our events teach positive participation, confidence, motor skills, persistence and sportsmanship while encouraging activity in a fun, race environment. We have two main characters at Tiddlers events, Pirate Pete who is our icon and demonstrates the race physically for each age group and is the focal point for our competitors at the finish line and "Febe Fairy" who presents the certificates, medals and lolly scramble on conclusion of the race. These people are unique to Tiddlers and add value to a successful enjoyable day.

With over 1000 active children on our database, majority racing at least twice per year, Tiddlers has quickly grown to become one of the fastest growing events for young children in Christchurch.

2011 – Tiddlers Interschool & Early Childhood Championships

My 2011 focus will be the first year of "Tiddlers Primary School and Early Childhood Championships". This project will involve children representing their primary school/Early Childhood Centre when they participate in a Tiddlers event. The schools/centres are invited to register, then receive a point from each child representing them and for overall places of 1st, 2nd, 3rd, for both boys and girls of each age group. Points can also be won by winning a Tiddlers colour in competition which we have at each event. This concept encourages participation and gives merit to children that might be more artistic than sporty. The winning school and early childhood centre with the most points at the end of the year will win a Tiddlers trophy.

Age groups are split as: Early Childhood – 2, 3, 4 years and Primary School – 5, 6, 7 years

"Thanks Viv for an amazing day! Both our boys had an awesome time and loved every minute of it. Such a well organised event. Congratulations". L.W

"Thank you so much for arranging this on Sunday. We thought it was very well organized and were most impressed. More importantly, my son loved it and has not taken his medal off yet!!" A & M. C.

"Just thought we would let you know just how impressed we were with the Tiddlers Multisport today, 15 August, it is the first time we have entered our children 3yrs and 4 yrs, (seen the signs many times and decided to try it out), the kids thoroughly enjoyed themselves and so did we as parents on the sidelines. The medals and certificates were a great touch for the proud kiddies, could not speak more highly of an event, we will definitely be there again next time". P. Family

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

Attitude – families/whanau are working closer together to help one another with their sporting abilities. We encourage family support and one of the great benefits which I have seen with my own eyes, is how families involve each other and how they volunteer. Watching them and their older siblings, cheering them to the end of the race or helping them with their bike - this is one of those magical moments.

"Harold the Giraffe" from Life Education Trust was our celebrity guest last week at our recent Tiddlers event. He is very popular with young children and a great identity to support the Tiddlers philosophy of a **healthy life style**.

"Just wanted to say another BIG thank you to you – we had a wonderful morning watching our boys having such a blast! I have 5 children ranging in ages and our youngest were missing out until we found Tiddlers. These events are just wonderful for the whole family!! We are looking forward to next years racing!! You do such an amazing thing!!" T. Family

"I would like to express my appreciation to you and your helpers in organising this event very successfully. My two grandchildren were enjoying themselves very much and it was a very, very good experience for them to participate. Many, many thanks for giving such a good day". L N.

POINT OF EXCELLENCE:

Tiddlers Objectives:

- a) To design an event that is achievable and enjoyable for young children but challenging enough to make them puffed.
- b) Must be fun and rewards participation as well as success, with certificates for the Fastest Boy and Girl of each age group.
- c) Brings together family/whanau in a supportive, enjoyable, positive atmosphere therefore strengthening the family unit.
- d) Is financially sustainable long term and can be grown or duplicated in New Zealand.
- e) Affordability – at \$8.00 our races are affordable for families regardless of financial position.
- f) Tiddlers is completely community based. Without this support it could not operate. Our parents are the promoters, marshals, administrators and support crew at any given event. They donate their time willingly and without hesitation and our volunteer list is expanding.
- g) Tiddlers venue is extremely well controlled for children's safety in all regards ie. Toilets, playground, away from roads or other hazards.
- h) Enthusiasm of our volunteers, this is very much a part of the success of Tiddlers Multisport

These objectives are the fundamental principals of Tiddlers Multisport. This is evident by the level of growth seen in Tiddlers since its beginning last April 2009.

ACHIEVEMENT:

Tiddlers Multisport has become successful and its growth speaks for itself. Some of the feedback received from our six monthly questionnaires distributed to parents of our competitors said Tiddlers races:

- Offers the opportunity for like minded families to come together
- Practices and encourages good sportsmanship often over-looked in today's community
- Great community spirit
- Supporting and encouraging physical progress in our littlies
- Strengthens family values - families that play together, stay together etc
- An essence of belonging and that they are welcome no matter what ability they have
- A sense of pride in our children and in themselves
- Encourages their children to want to ride their bike more often and get better.
- Have noticed an increase in confidence or self esteem in their child/ren

We have some parents that tell us their children don't sleep leading up to our races due to excitement and spending the **days singing our Tiddlers song**. Some children will wear their **medals to school and put race photos on the school blog pages, sleep in their medals and phone grand-parents and family members to tell them all about their experience.**

*"Thanks so much to you and your team for a fantastic day on Sunday. You were so well organized and ran to time really well. **Hunter was very proud of his medal and took it to show his grandparents that night.** My partner Matt would be keen to help out next time so please keep us in the loop". Jo.*

*"Thank you so much for the Tiddlers Multi Sport Duathlon.....my three year old had a blast....pretty ingenious of you to book where there is a park so kids can amuse themselves while waiting for their turn. Compliments to all at this even especially Vivien McCaskey. Everyone was helpful and patient. **Good food, fun play....just like a family bbq.** Thanx for a great time....looking forward to the next race". B. T.*

EFFICIENCY:

Why is Tiddlers efficient?

- Low overheads, successful with or without sponsorship or funding
- Community participation, parents are always volunteering to help
- Races run to a tight time table, displayed on our website – no down time
- Race co-ordination, events are scheduled to the minute, 350 children can be raced within 3 hours
- Regular volunteers means efficiency in race preparation, event set up and pack down
- Time restraints are age appropriate, youngest children racing first, finishing with oldest 2-7 yrs.

EFFECTIVENESS:

Why is Tiddlers effective?

- Tiddlers is unique, there is no other race event like this for young children
- Atmosphere is like a carnival with face painting, sausage sizzle, lolly scramble and racing
- Enjoyment, everyone has a great time. Parents, grandparents, siblings and spectators
- Engaging, they are great to watch and even more fun to participate in. Everyone has fun!
- Short, Tiddlers races are three minutes in duration and events are completed within three hours
- Participation numbers, growing tremendously and predominately by word of mouth.
- Tiddlers jingle, played at all events, children know the words and sing it at home too
- Families come from out of town to participate in what is effectively a three minute race!

SUSTAINABILITY:

Why is Tiddlers sustainable?

- In a nut-shell – children love to race and always will given an opportunity!
- Participant numbers, demand is outgrowing capacity
- Low cost structure and is relative to the number of participants that we currently have
- The thrill of the win, people still strive to achieve their best and winning is part of this success
- Parents love watching their children participate and will go to great lengths for this enjoyment. It is our primal nature as parents to enjoy the success of our child/ren.
- Variety is added to keep things fresh, ie. Celebrity guests, fun adult races, race themes etc.

One of the reasons I compete in triathlon personally is the satisfaction I get from participation, the interaction with other competitors, event excitement, community spirit and friendship gained. Tiddlers Multisport has as much to do about community as it does about sport.

Budget Specifics based upon 250 children competing at \$8 each – per child cost analysis

Item per Child	Cost per Child
Medal	\$ 0.17
Certificate	\$ 0.08
Orange Juice & Cup	\$ 0.12
Banana	Donated
Bouncy Castle	\$ 0.65
Generator	\$ 0.35
Lolly scramble	\$ 0.09
Park Hire	\$ 1.00
Flyers	\$ 0.80
Posters Coloured A4	\$ 0.08
Posters Coloured A3	\$ 0.18
Vehicle Fuel	\$ 0.75
Face Painters & Materials	\$ 0.40
Sticky Race Name Labels	\$ 0.05
PA System Hire	\$ 0.22
Compere Donation	\$ 0.50
General Photocopying	\$ 0.40
Postage or freight costs	\$ 0.40
Misc & Incidentals	\$ 1.00
Total cost per child	\$ 7.24

Event break even is at 200 children based upon the above information without funding assistance.