



Hunua Heaven

NEARBY CITY: Auckland

DISTANCE FROM CBD: 75 km via Kawakawa

EXACT LOCATION: Waharau Regional Park, Kaiaua

TYPE OF TRAIL RUN: Loop with 4km out and back section at the start

DIFFICULTY: moderate to hard

DEFINING CHARACTERISTICS: Groomed single trail, technical tree roots, muddy slippery sections

TOTAL RUN DISTANCE: 18.9 KM

TIME TO RUN: Elite 2hr 30 min Novice 4 hr 20 min

TOTAL Elevation gain: 869 metres

ONLINE REFERENCE: <http://connect.garmin.com/activity/227869546>

BEST MAP/S: Topographical map of NZ TOPO 50/BB33 or Waharau Regional Park Guide

RUN IT: Starting from the car park, run through the picnic area across the cattle stops, following the orange marker poles. Go through a gateway and a short climb across grassy paddocks. Turn right into some native bush, over the stile and follow a wide metal groomed trail.

Follow the trail on a steady upward climb, moving into thicker native bush. Run until you come to a trail maker at a T intersection, take a hard right, continuing along a wide trail for another 300m. At the next fork, take the Mangatangi Ridge Track. After a short climb, you will come to a nice wide muddy downhill, run all the way down to a camp site called Thousand Acre Clearing.

Passing the camp site you will cross a small stream and start another quite difficult climb up to the ridge line. Follow the blaze orange triangular plastic track markers. Continue to climb and run through some nice mature Punga trees, eventually opening out to nice grassy lookout sections. Towards the end of the climb it gets steeper again, take care to follow the markers. After 8.2 km you come to another intersection with the Upper Mangatawhiri track, do not go down the Upper Mangatawhiri track, turn hard right here and start heading down the ridge through a technical

muddy, tree root section. After a short climb you will pop out at the highest point of the Hunua ranges at 688m elevation. This is known as K trig, climb up the viewing tower for 360 views.

Carry on the track North past the old hut, down a short section of steps, and onto some wooden board walks. After about 450m you will come to a bench seat, turn right onto Kohukohunui Track, where you will start a superb down hill section back to the start of the loop, with a few little ups. There are a few sections further down where you will need to push through bracken and ladder fern, once again beware of the orange trail markers, stick to the trails; there is also the odd post with directional arrows on them. At the 13.5 km mark you will come to another Y intersection, the left track is closed due to Kauri Die Back Prevention, so take the right fork, and get onto some nice smooth flowing downhill sections. At 14.7km you will be back at the end of the loop and from here, its back down the same 4km section, all the way back to the car and enjoy. >>

POST RUN GOODNESS: A nice place to refuel is to take a drive down to the Kaiaua Fish and Chip shop, grab a feed, and or continue on to Miranda for a hot swim at the Natural Hot Water Springs.