



Ridsdale entered on a whim. - PHOTOS: RON SHILLINGFORD



Ed Lee of PWC Also Rans hams it up at the end.



Brittain ran three legs at the last minute.

Mike can't be hounded for this



Berns finished strongly.

RON SHILLINGFORD
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He didn't run with his dog this time but over 31 miles through tough terrain in the boiling morning sun, that could have been fatal.

Mike Ridsdale, triathlete and ultra-distance runner, is one of Cayman's fittest athletes and usually runs with his beloved dog Storm.

But this time supportive wife Julie and Storm were mere spectators as he toughed it out to win the second annual Off The Beaten Track run.

It started and finished at Public Beach and although Hell in West Bay was not on the random route, set over six legs of varying difficulty, everyone of the 100-plus competitors, including the team runners, put themselves through hell to do it.

This ultra-marathon is designed to reflect the tortuous race run every year in the

hot sands of Morocco - the Marathon des Sables - only the Cayman route is over beaches, dyke roads and back streets.

The Marathon des Sables is considered the world's toughest road race, stretching over 240km over six days in burning hot day-time temperatures - and freezing night-time conditions.

Off The Beaten Track's main sponsor is Ken Krys, CEO of his finance company Krys Global. He is a long-standing marathon enthusiast who ran the excruciating Marathon des Sables in 2009 and the Antarctic Ice Marathon three months ago.

Krys was one of the few individual runners who completed on Sunday. He was way behind Ridsdale but at least had the satisfaction of finishing a race he created to help raise funds for charity. Off The Beaten Track has now supplanted the Cayman Marathon as the Island's

The winning team - Beer Me - smashed the previous time out of sight, but it's no wonder because the six runners are all in the top dozen fastest individuals in the Cayman Islands.



Krys staged another successful event.

toughest fitness event.

Last year 18 teams and two individuals competed in the inaugural event which started and finished at Public Beach. The winning relay team was Burton's Burners in a time of 4 hours 1 minute and 44 seconds. Richard Barber was the first individual runner to finish, completing in four hours and 41 minutes and he competed on a team this time.

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Beer Me finished in 3:24:56. Marius Acker, James Ogden, Ray Welds, Mark Hogan, Conrad Proud and Mike McDonald were downing their chilled beers and tucking into the lovely food well before everyone else.

Ridsdale finished in 4:27:52 and the winning individual female was the newcomer to the island, Lizzie Berns, in 5:36:01. She finished looking as fresh as a daisy but certainly didn't feel like one. Krys's time was 5:55:52.

Roadkill were the second placed team in 3:51:46 and the fabulously named Derek & The Dominoes were the third team in 4:00:43. The Governor, Duncan Taylor, competed in a team and Scott Brittain, who did not intend

to run at all, ended up doing three legs - around 16 miles - for UBS, because Chris Day withdrew the night before after getting injured playing football for Sunset. What a soldier!

There were 27 teams that included 127 runners. Of the individuals, six registered but one dropped out the day before and one dropped out after the first leg, so four finished. Besides Ridsdale, Berns and Krys, Bradley Kruger completed in 6:08:45.

All the \$20,000-plus proceeds from the race will again be donated to Facing Africa - a charity dedicated to helping children in Nigeria and Ethiopia who suffer from a disease, NOMA.

NOMA is an acute and ravaging gangrenous infection affecting the face. The victims are mainly children under the age of six, caught in a vicious cycle of extreme poverty and malnutrition. The mortality rate is around 90 per cent. Those who do survive suffer from immense distress and social isolation as a result of their facial deformities.

The event's other main sponsors were Tower Marketing, Governor's Square, Stuarts Walker Hersant, PwC, Mourant Ozannes, MCS, dms Management, Maples and Calder, Red Bull, Maples Fund Services, Solomon Harris, the Cay-

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The Ogier, all-female team, from left, Michelle Bailey, Daniella Skotnicki, Edel Andersen, Claire Lloyd-Hickey, Lisa Kehoe. Missing is Jane Robson.



The GCM team, from left, Shane Delaney, Joanne Woods, Gill Comins, Alanna Grace and Chandra Friesen. Missing from photo is Cara Hennessy.



Visitor Hazel Wood finished for the Chi Running team.



Governor Taylor's team did well too.



Red Bull girls Lydia and Kat kept everyone refreshed.

Mike can't be hounded for this

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manian Compass, Vision Marketing/Signs of Paradise and Foster's Food Fair.

All-action Ridsdale, 40, is an office manager for a plumbing company. In January he ran from Morgan's Harbour in West Bay to Kaibo, following the coastal road through Bodden Town and East End, for a total of 46 miles, making the run unique in more than one way because he raised more than \$7,000 for the Humane Society.

A jubilant Ridsdale said: "I didn't run Off The Beaten Track last year because I was training for an early season Ironman so that was my main focus.

"I completed the 46 mile run around Cayman in January so didn't know how my legs would feel. I did the Cancer Half Marathon recently and managed to win that in 1:23, not my best time

and my legs felt tired during that run and also during the Cross Island Relay three weeks earlier.

"I decided to cut back on the running for a few weeks to recover so didn't get the long runs in you would normally do in preparation for a 50K race but knew I had no choice. This past week I've been feeling much better so thought I'd give it a go."

He had a plan of running at the same pace as the Roadkill team for the first couple of legs. This went to plan and after three legs they were in joint second place overall. On the fourth leg they started to pull away and it was half way through that leg he started to feel bad with some stomach issues.

"I was ill over the fifth and sixth legs and probably lost over 20 minutes. I think this was due partly to how hot it was and also my nutrition. It was an incredibly



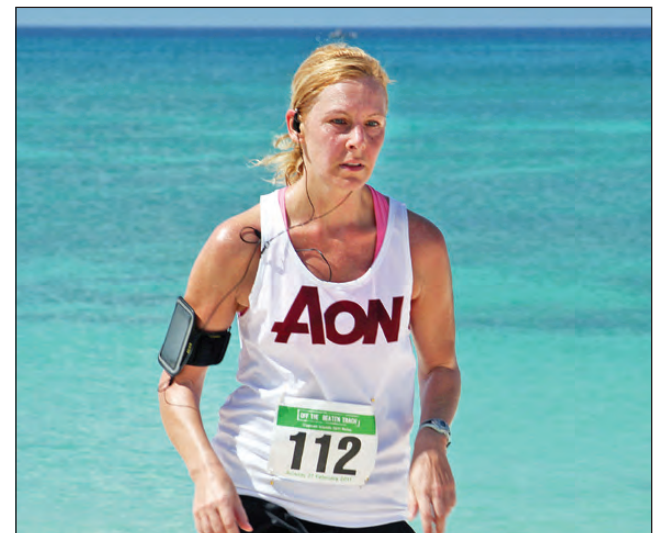
Shanice Kelly ran for the cadets.

challenging day and most definitely the toughest race held here in Cayman.

"The terrain is so varied with the sand sections late into the race taking its toll on your legs. Nevertheless, it was a great day all round and I was very pleased to finish as first place individual. It's a fascinating race so different to

anything else here and you're always having to concentrate on where you are going."

He didn't run this one for charity as the decision to go solo was made late. Schedule-wise he is also playing this year on a whim and hasn't signed up for an off-island race yet. "That's the first time for a few years



Isabel Mettetal finishes for Aon.

so that may well change. It's still early in the year.

"The Humane Society is a big part of my life and Julie's. We love animals, have a rescue dog of our own and feel sorry for these poor animals that have been mistreated or abandoned.

"If we can give them some happiness with just

a little time and effort on our part then that makes us happy. With the money we raised, we have almost completed renovations at the shelter and it looks fantastic and better living conditions for the dogs."

For full results visit www.offthebeatentrack.ky

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