

XCR 17 Captain's report Round 5 Sandown Relays

It was back to the organised chaos of the relays for round 5 of XCR 17 at Sandown Racecourse. The course is a challenging 6.2k with the long, gradual hill on the back straight. We also had traditional Sandown weather with a chilly, brisk wind for about half of the course, and the occasional shower reminding us that things could have been a lot worse.

Once again there was a festive atmosphere to the event and a real sense of action and participation. For the KSB men despite early concerns about numbers, we fielded full teams in Div3, Div 6, U20 men, two U14 teams and 40 and 50+ events. It was an important round as we are now half way through the season and provides a good chance to see where we stand on the ladders, and round 6 is only a week away.

The times for most runners were better than their times at the first relay at Jell's Park. Jell's is hilly, but shorter (6.1K) than Sandown, but many runners were about 2 minutes quicker (and some more) at Sandown. Our 2017 season has been progressing well with a number of fine performances and come backs, and we now have 5 rounds left to capitalise on the good start, especially in Div 3.

Our Div 3 team continued its good form coming 3rd in 1.49.32 with Sean running 20.11, Shea Wellington 20.32, Lachie Youn 22.25 in a fine and welcome return to competition, Dave Abfalter 23.07 and Dom Michienzi 23.20. They were only 50 secs behind first and 30 behind second in an agonizingly close race, and it would seem promotion is between our team, Waverley and Nunawading. At present we are in equal second place with Waverley and 6 points behind Nunawading. It is a very close competition and we are still well in contention for a top two finish at the season's end, but probably need a win in one of the remaining rounds. The big threat to our standing in Div 3 will come in the round the day before the City to Surf. If we lose quality runner for the round, our contention may come to an end.

Our Div 6 team finished a commendable 7th. Led by Owen Leggett in 23.10, then followed John Moloney in 28.18, Paul Kennedy 28.23 and Izaak Long 30.39. The team continues to be well placed on the ladder in 5th position and has been consistent throughout. The under 20 men ran well for a Bronze medal in 1.04.49 with Alex Sykes 20.2, Pat Matthews 22.08 and Jacob Bell 22.20 and are in 6th position on the ladder despite having teams in only two rounds. Alex ran the second fastest time recorded in the division and continues his great form this season.

For this round KSB fielded two under 14 teams and both performed very well finishing 4th and 5th in a close competition. Team 1 ran 36.37 with Dilan Egodawatte 11.38, Kye Gillingham 11.52 and Elias Kahsay 13.07. The second team ran 37.59 and James Sarris and Will Kennedy both ran 12.10 and Tom Kennedy 13.39. These under age runners are all running well and many are improving on a weekly basis. The team is 4th on the ladder, and it is really great to have the depth of talent.

In the over age competition, competition is fierce, with large number of teams. Our 40+ team again finished 10th (out of 12 teams) in 1:17.59. , Laz Sarris 24.14 ran a blinder with Peter Keighery 25.13 and Russell Cram 29.59. Laz is running consistently good times this season and Peter is consistently good and Russ improving every week as he gets fitter. The 40+ team is in equal 10th position on the ladder with six other teams, which shows how tough and close this competition is.

In the 50+ men, we were 7th out of a massive 18 teams (1:15.45). Gerry Brown 24.08 and John Kondogonis 24.54 both ran negative splits with Greg Moore 26.43. The team is in 5th position on the ladder of 21 teams. The top three teams are well clear, but only 4 points separate 4th, 5th and KSB. Once again the results went the way of the 50+ team, but we are only too aware that Dom and Dave were running up in Div3.

In the last report, there was theme of strong intra club rivalries, but this round it was our men and women going stride for stride. Emma Brown mixed it with Peter Keighery and John Kondogonis in a continuation of their Wednesday training battles, with John finally grabbing a lead only a couple of hundred metres from home, Gerry Brown and Kate Abfalter took off together and Bianca Share took Greg Moore's lead 200 meters from their change and led for the two laps with Greg hanging on for grim death about 50 metres back.

Our Women's Div 2 team finished 7th and Div 4, 10th and the 40+ a very good 5th. It would seem that the KSB women are really hitting their straps and running well at this stage of the season. There were some excellent times at Sandown that bode well for the 10k next week. Kate Abfalter was the quickest KSB woman around Sandown in 25.08, closely followed by Emma Brown in 25.10. Steph Kondogonis recorded a huge PB for Sandown events.