

XCR 17 Captain's report Round 8 Anglesea Ekiden Relay

The Ekiden Relay at Anglesea was always going to be a defining event for the KSB men's 2017 season. In many ways it proved to be so. The clash with the City to Surf loomed as a problem but the number of omissions proved far greater than we had anticipated. The course, especially the initial longer legs is also very demanding – this is an event about racing rather than times for even the shortest distances, and every runner for KSB was tested

This is my first report as your “non-playing captain” and so it will be interesting to see if it makes a difference in the view of things. More of that later. Our first concern was would we have a Div 3 team and the answer was yes; we had entered a Div 6 team but were unlikely to have the numbers, but it might give someone a race. Ah the best laid plans of mice and men.....!

Arriving at Anglesea it was pleasant weather but with a strong that threatened to be an issue. Our team in Div 3, Lachie, Tom, Dave, Greg and John K had been named and all but Dave were there well before start time. So it was help with the tent, get juniors organised and seeing Lachie off as our first runner at the start. John Moloney was ill and would miss the event and Russ was happy not to run as he is still nursing injury and so no Div 6 team. It was then that we realised that Greg had been bumped from Div 3 for Damien Hughes – who knew?? -, but neither Damien nor Dave were there, so what do? We decided to keep Greg in reserve, but by the time Damien and Dave were both there, Div 6 had started and so Greg was all dressed up with nowhere to go.

In Div 3 Nunawading got off to an absolute flyer and without Sean and Shea, we had no answer, but Lachie kept us right up in the mix of the top 4 or 5 in the rugged first leg which is long, with rutted and uneven uphill sections. Tom kept us in the race with another good run over another long and difficult leg and then Mr reliable, Dave, ran the solid third leg handing off to Damien. Nunawading was well ahead, but then Essendon, Yarra Ranges, Coburg, Williamstown and KSB were in the mix, and Waverley was further back. Oddly the wind wasn't a factor for most of the course. Things were looking a little brighter than we might have hoped. Damien ran a blinder for the 6k and so, the question became “Could John K hold us in one of those top 6 spots to the finish?” The answer was a resounding “**YES**” and our team came in 5th in a really terrific performance.

So how do things stand on the ladder stand after such an interesting race? Nunawading has taken over top spot on 101 points, KSB are second on 100 points, and after their 8th place, Waverley are third on 93 with Williamstown 4th on 85 points. So KSB Div 3 are still very much in contention for the premiership with 2 rounds to go and with the top two teams in line for promotion to Div 2, we are very much a possibility if things go well in the half marathon and final relay. Congratulation to Lachie, Tom, Dave, Damien and John K for running such a good race in difficult circumstances, and giving us the opportunity to capitalise on the great efforts by all KSB runners in the preceding seven rounds.

While there is nothing to report for Div 6 or our over-age teams, our junior men also did us proud. While they too were depleted in numbers, Jacob Bell, Izaak Long and Wilson Cram won a well-earned silver medal for the difficult event. Our under 14 team of Elias Kahsay and Aidan Cram lacked a 3rd member and so failed to constitute a team and Elias' time reflected the time that he was lost in the wilderness – you will have to ask him for details.

Our KSB women managed to field Div 2 and Div 4 teams both of which ran well and our women's under 20 team of Maggie Huang, Courtney, Holstein and Georgia Stepanoski came home with the gold medal. So congratulation to our KSB women on a fine overall performance

Overall, the Div 3 men dodged the bullet that the clash with the City to Surf fired. We are still very much in contention for both the premiership and promotion to division two. The fate of the season rests upon our performances in the final two rounds. Let's hope that we can get our best runners on the track, because at our best we can mix it with the best that Div has to offer.

We look forward to welcoming back all who ran the City to Surf and hope that they had great runs. We wish John Moloney a speedy return to good health and hope that Russell continues his recovery from injury. We all missed Ron from the event today and wish him a rapid return to better health. Finally does not running on the day make a difference on how you view and interpret things? Of course it does. I am not dog tired, I have finished the report on the day of the event, and I am just a little bit grumpy, so be patient with me. I am also looking for race to run as I do not think having a 6 week gap between races leading up to the half would be a good preparation.