

XCR 17 Captain's report Round 1 Jells Park

In the now traditional start to the cross country season, we had a first round relay at Jell's Park. There is a festive, if not carnival, atmosphere about this event. It was a near perfect day in terms of weather with warm still conditions, and with the marquees, hundreds of teams and people running in every direction. It was quite a splendid sight.

As always with relays, there is an air of chaos, verging on panic as teams are sorted, late replacements are found and running order is decided. It is reassuring to see that the same sense of chaos prevails in every club. For KSB this year, it was little more urgent as our coach had been unwell and was missing from the event. However, once the gun sounded we were off and things went off without any major hitches.

For the KSB men this year, apart from the U20 men, there was general concern that we were under-manned and might struggle a bit. However, spirits rose with the early appearance of Sean Stevens and the return of Gerry Brown – we seemed to be in front even before the start! Our Div 3 team came in a commendable fourth in 1.53.07 with Sean running 20.11, but ably followed by Shea, Dave, Dom and Qwen (Sean Stevens 20.11 2, Owen Leggett 24.33 3, Shea Wellington 21.35 4, Dave Abfalter 23.12 5 and Dom Michienzi 23.36 6). This was a fine effort and bodes well for future events, when things are a little longer. It was great to see Shea run so well and be unhappy with his time and Dave and Dom running so close in times. Owen will of course improve with every run.

Our Div 6 team was an interesting group with Tom Gorman returning from China, but still fit and running well and pushing for elevation into the Div 3 team as was Jacob Bell who ran a hard course under 22 minutes. Perhaps we have a little more depth in the Open men than we thought. (1.45.06 Tom Gorman 23.46 2 Paul Kennedy 27.48 3 Izaak Long 32.04 4 and Jacob Bell 21.48 5) I also pay tribute to Paul Kennedy and Izaak, who as great club men are always prepared to run in the team that they are needed, even if it is not their favourite distance or event.

The under 20 men were a little down on numbers, but ran a very creditable 4th. They will be stronger as the season progresses (1:07.03 1 Alex Sykes 20.14 2, Pat Matthews 21.59 3 and Caleb Hough 24.50). It was impressive to see that Alex seemed to be almost shadowing Sean as they ran their two laps, with only 3 seconds between them. Similarly for the under 16 men and under 14 men, with a number of younger runners (10th 0:40.41 1 Tom Kennedy 13.56 2, Wilson Cram 12.50 3 and Aidan Cram 13.55) and (U14 7th 0:38.02 1 Nick Bell 11.47 2, Will Kennedy 13.51 3 and Dilan Egodawatte 12.26) who ran really good times. It is great to have the depth of talent and we can look forward to success in future years

At the other end of the age group, our 40+ team finished 10th out of 14 teams against some very classy opposition (1:23.35 1 Peter Keighery 26.31 2, Laz Sarris 25.53 3 and Russell Cram 31.11). Laz is running consistently good times, Peter is always consistently good and Russ vows that he will be fitter and faster as the season progresses. In the 50+ men, we were 7th out of massive 19 teams (1:16.25 7 Gerry Brown 24.19 2, Greg Moore 26.14 3 and John Kondogonis 25.31). The result gave short term bragging rights to the 50+, but also showed that some things never change – Gerry ran brilliantly, John is unbelievably consistent in his pace and Greg went out too hard!

Overall, it was a brilliant day for running and our men of all ages did KSB proud. We also did well getting 7 teams up and running. Get well soon Ron. Finally we congratulate our KSB women on their fine times and efforts at Jells. Once again they are an inspiration to us all.