

## **XCR 17 Captain's report Round 2 Wandin Park**

The first battle in the Wandin Park run is getting to the venue. Battling the traffic on the Maroondah Highway is bad enough, but for those using sat navs, bush tracks, detours and farm paddocks are more of a challenge (ask the two Johns). As far as I know, we all got there for the start, but there may be the odd lost soul trying to get to Wandin Park still.

For the KSB men, we had another good solid effort with a strong number of runners. Sean Stevens continued with his fine return this year, and Shea Wellington ran well and was happier with his run than he was with Jells. Our Div 3 team came in second with Sean running 29.35, followed by Shea Wellington 31.09, Tom Gorman 33.42, Dave Abfalter 34.25 and Owen Leggett 34.57. This was another really good effort and hopefully we can improve on things as distances get longer. We are second on the ladder which is a very promising start to our season

Our Div 6 team finished third and was led in by Gerry Brown with a run of 35.17, continuing a great return to racing (6<sup>th</sup> in his age group ladder), then John Kondogonis on 37.19 a much quicker race than 2016 and just in front of Laz Sarras 37.35. They had an interesting race over the course with the places changing a few times. Following Laz was Peter Keighery on 37.56, a good debut on a tough course. Our Div 6 team is currently equal third on the ladder.

Paul Kennedy led our Div 7 team with a 40.14 and a fine fast finish followed by Greg Moore 40.43 John Moloney 42.05 and Russell Cram 44.37. It was good to see that we could muster the numbers for 3 men's open teams, remembering that were without some regulars such as Dom. We came in seventh.

Our under age men were depleted this round. Elias Kahsay 8.08 and Aidan Cram 9.37 were our only representatives in the under 14 boys - both ran well - while Jacob Bell 15.23 and Izaak Long 22.47 were our under 18 runners. Izaak took a tumble towards the end when a tree root reached out to grab him, but was still smiling at the end. Unusually, Alex Sykes was our only under 20 runner and finished again in the top 10 with a time of 14.33. He is 8<sup>th</sup> on the under 20 ladder at present.

At the other end of the age group, our 40+ team finished outside the top ten with Dave Abfalter, Laz and Russell making up the team, while in the 50+ event Gerry, Peter and John K made up our team which finished in ninth position and we are equal seventh on the ladder.

Laz is running consistently well and Peter was his usual consistent self. John K ran even splits for both laps and was heard to say that the course wasn't so bad and that he was very happy with his time. What is going on...a long distance runner happy with their time???? Paul Kennedy had a great run and finished as strongly as any finisher and John Moloney is improving every race and is showing glimpses of his pre-injury form, even though the same tree root that got Izaak caused him to fall too. A typical runner, John wasn't worried about the scratches, but wasn't happy with the 10 seconds it cost him!

Last year, it was generally agreed that Wandin Park was the toughest round of the season, but perhaps after some good times by our runners in this year's event, its tough reputation is under challenge. It will be interesting to see how comparisons stand after the Cruden Farm run in a couple of week's time.

Our women's teams were also a little depleted this round, particularly in the under age groups. However there were some fine performances in the open age and over-age events and we congratulate our KSB women of all ages on their fine times and efforts at Wandin Park. There will be some great inter-club races when we meet over a common distance through the season.