

## MODERATE PERFORMANCE FROM BOX HILL ATHLETES IN 12 K CROSS COUNTRY AT BUNDOORA

A biting wind gusted across the course at Bundoora this year, similar to many previous years. A brief period of rain threatened to really upset the applecart, but, fortunately, conditions remained generally fine for the two senior races. This race is the selection trial for the Victorian team for the Australian Cross Country championships, in Nowra this year, I believe. This usually means that the field is a strong one, with aspirants for the Victorian team putting in their claim for a place.

The women's race was held before the men's race. Keryn McCann travelled from NSW for a final hit out before her next major competition in a few weeks time. Anna Thompson, now running for Glen Huntly, attempted unsuccessfully to match it with her, but dropped back after the first lap and the differential between these two remained relatively constant over the remainder of the 8 k course. McCann had a very determined look on her face from start to finish, despite having a few of the talented U/20 male competitors in front of her. McCann and Thompson opened up an enormous gap over the other athletes competing, with McCann finishing in 27 m. 12 s. to Thompson's 27 m. 20 s. Nicki Chapple ran a solid race to place 6<sup>th</sup>, in 29 m. 33 s., 24 seconds behind third place, one of her better recent efforts. Megan Sloane ran a strong race to finish placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in the 45 years' age group. Amanda Harper completed the women's team placing 38<sup>th</sup> (35 m. 55s.) and running her best race for the year, with a very steady second half performance.

The Open Men's (12 k.) race saw 11 athletes representing Box Hill, and, as all our starters finished the race, we completed two teams, which was very pleasing. Even better for Box Hill was the return to competition of Marcus Tierney, following an extensive overseas tour where he helped to prop up the ailing European economy by spending vast amounts of cash. Kynan Dawes was unavailable for this race.

There was strong competition at the top end of the field after one lap with eight athletes in contention: the remarkable evergreen Steve Moneghetti, Paul Fenn, Jay Burke, Shane Nankervis, Mark Thompson, Nick Harrison, Julian Dwyer and Simon Field. Darren Wilson, competing for APS was surprisingly well off the pace, even in the early stages. The leading 10 runners quickly opened up a break over the rest of the field.

Box Hill's leading contenders were Dale Bickham who ran a very fast first lap, in 17<sup>th</sup> place, buoyed by his great run at Albert Park, John Meagher, Luke Yeatman, moving at his best for some time, and Graeme Olden. These athletes were all placed in the first 30. Paul Boxshall, Sam Hassett, and Marcus Tierney were our next competitors in the top fifth of the field. Tony Bird and Adam Pepper ran in close proximity to each other, with Tony unable to head Adam (or Chris O'Connor later in the race) on this occasion. David Ayers was further back in the field.

As the race progressed, competitors peeled off the leading bunch as they were exhausted by Moneghetti's relentless pace. Paul Fenn, 2<sup>nd</sup> in 2001 slipped back to 8<sup>th</sup> which was a surprise. Another athlete who relinquished his grip on a high placing was Daniel Quin who slipped back to 30<sup>th</sup> after being in the top 10 for most of the race. Darren Wilson also eased back through the field, ultimately to finish 20<sup>th</sup>. The only athletes to maintain their tempo or to move forward included Mark Thompson, unable to wrest the lead back from Moneghetti after making the pace earlier in the race, Nick Harrison who moved from 5<sup>th</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> later in the event, Simon Field, who maintained his tempo to secure 4<sup>th</sup> place, and Sean Quilty, Doncaster's leading athlete, who moved through the field steadily to reach 10<sup>th</sup> place. Of Box Hill's leading contenders, John Meagher did best, moving

past a number of his rivals to claim 21<sup>st</sup> position. A mere 13 seconds behind him was Luke Yeatman who performed well in the cold conditions to claim 24<sup>th</sup> position, with Graeme Olden 30 seconds adrift in 30<sup>th</sup> position. Paul Boxshall ran more conservatively in the early stages and filled 35<sup>th</sup> position, four places in advance of Marcus Tierney, 39<sup>th</sup>, who picked up a number of positions in the concluding stages, as the athletes who had expended too much effort slowed towards the end of the race. Dale Bickham found that his early fast pace took its toll, but hung on gamely to finish the race in 53<sup>rd</sup> position, completing our Section 1 team. We believe that the team finished 5<sup>th</sup>, but results had not been posted at the conclusion of the day, so we await official confirmation of the team's position. Glen Huntly won from Doncaster and APS or Ballarat YCW.

Chris O'Connor moved through the field after a modest early pace and passed numerous athletes in the second half of the race. He couldn't quite catch Adam Pepper who ran well to maintain his relative position throughout the race. Sam Hasset had trouble with one of his feet and removed one of his spikes mid race. Sam finished, nevertheless, slightly behind Chris, and ahead of Tony Bird. David Ayers completed the second team with a gritty performance, on his way to inspect the scones and refreshments at the end of the race, enabling us to secure a second scoring team. Dave gave his usual excellent best in ensuring that there was not much food placed in the boots of Box Hill cars leaving the course.

Lachlan Aspinall competed in the Under 20 race where he ran solidly at the front end of the field, finishing in 11<sup>th</sup> place running the time of 29 m. 13 s. Sarah Evans finished 16<sup>th</sup> in 18 m. 28 in the U/16 6 k. Alice Baquie was 5<sup>th</sup> in the U/18 4 K Cross Country race, backed up by Amy Zagato who finished 9<sup>th</sup> in 16 m. 35 in the same race. In the U/ 20 6 K Cross Country, Emily Smith was 3<sup>rd</sup> in 23 m. 27 with Jocelyn Keage, 4<sup>th</sup> in 24 m. 10.

The next event is the Road Relays, not at Sandown this year, but at Flemington Race Course instead. It is probably the first time since 1984 that the relays won't be held at Sandown. Men's and women's relays commence at 1.30 p.m. on July 20<sup>th</sup>.

Ian Sloane

## Results and Times of Senior Men's Race

Name	Club	Time	Final Place
S. Moneghetti	BYCW	36 m. 43	1
M. Thompson	GH	37 m. 02	2
N. Harrison	GH	37 m. 18	3
S. Field	St K		4
J. Burke	BYCW		5
S Nankervis	BYCW		6
<b>J. Meagher</b>	<b>BH</b>	<b>40 m. 15</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>L Yeatman</b>	<b>BH</b>	<b>40 m. 29</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>G. Olden</b>	<b>BH</b>	<b>40 m. 59</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>P. Boxshall</b>	<b>BH</b>	<b>41 m. 51</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>M. Tierney</b>	<b>BH</b>	<b>42 m. 08</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>D. Bickham</b>	<b>BH</b>	<b>43 m. 33</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>A. Pepper</b>	<b>BH</b>	<b>44 m. 33</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>C. O'Connor</b>	<b>BH</b>	<b>44 m. 52</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>S. Hassett</b>	<b>BH</b>	<b>44 m. 54</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>T. Bird</b>	<b>BH</b>	<b>45 m. 07</b>	<b>97 (1st 50 yrs +)</b>
<b>D Ayers</b>	<b>BH</b>	<b>46 m. 16</b>	<b>103</b>

N.B. Tony Bird and Chris O'Connor appear to have been given incorrect placings in the first iteration of the official results.

## Women's results

Keryn McCann	NSW	27 m. 12	1 <sup>st</sup>
Anna Thompson	GH	27 m. 20	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Kate Seibold	Mal	29 m. 09	3 <sup>rd</sup>
<b>Nicki Chapple</b>	<b>BH</b>	<b>29 m. 32</b>	<b>6<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>Megan Sloane</b>	<b>BH</b>	<b>35 m. 32</b>	<b>36<sup>th</sup> (2<sup>nd</sup> 45 years +)</b>
<b>Amanda Harper</b>	<b>BH</b>	<b>35 m. 54</b>	<b>39<sup>th</sup></b>