

NEW LOCATION FOR CROSS COUNTRY RELAYS EXCELLENT JUNIOR RESULTS AT BRIMBANK PARK

The Cross Country Relay meeting at the National Equestrian Centre at Werribee was the first event on the 2003 Winter calendar and the first time that these races had been held at this venue. The course was relatively flat with a number of obstacles including sandy rises and jumps. Box Hill made a pleasing start to the Winter season, with some fine team performances by male and female teams. It was particularly pleasing to see such a large number of senior female athletes representing the club. We entered three senior men's teams, an Under 20, an Under 18, and an Under 16 teams. Given our current strength, it was disappointing that we were unable to put up more teams and the Section 6 team was one runner short of a full team, particularly as the team was leading when it was unable to continue for lack of a fourth runner.

Marcus Tierney led the Section 1 team off and running a very competitive leg, completing the two lap course in 5th position, within striking distance of our Section 1 rivals. Marcus ran our fastest leg, and for much of the leg was holding third place in Section 1. John Meagher showed that he is still a force to be reckoned with in running a solid second leg, bringing us up into the silver medal position at the end of his second lap. John's time was the second fastest recorded by a Box Hill athlete on the day. Old St Kevin's (in Section 2) maintained their lead over all other clubs with Glen Huntly leading Section 1, having passed early leader Peninsula Road Runners.

Graeme Olden was our third leg runner, and conceded a small margin to the Ballarat YCW runner. At the end of his second lap we were 2:01 behind the leaders (Glen Huntly) and only 7 seconds down on third place. Barry Lynch took over, after turning up to run the already allocated third leg. He ran a strong first lap, but unfortunately he was unable to sustain the effort in the second lap and Box Hill conceded another place to be fifth, 1:24 behind Ballarat YCW. Geelong's Lee Troop ran the fastest leg of the day in recording 19 m. 32 in this leg.

Recently joined member Hamish McElwee, working on secondment in Melbourne from Perth, was our fifth leg runner and turned up trumps, running a time very similar to John Meagher's time, which was very impressive when we were unsure of his form. Hamish has had a solid running career in New Zealand and we were delighted to welcome him to the club. He pulled back a very substantial chunk of time out of both his Geelong and Ballarat YCW opponents, being 43 seconds and 37 second respectively behind these teams on handing over to our last competitor. This meant that both the third- and fourth-placed teams were well within sight, ready for Chris O'Connor to pursue in the last leg. Chris had agreed to take on the challenge, promoted from the Section 3 team, when our two earlier selected runners had declared themselves unavailable to compete, and he made a great fist of his leg. He held fifth place to the end, ensuring that St Kevin's, APS and Peninsula were unable to pass us.

The depth of our Section 3 team has been very great over the last ten years in the relay events, but this year we had a very diminished number of available runners, which was disappointing. Liam Rourke got the team off to a splendid start recording the fastest Section 3 Box Hill time of the day. Sam Hassett on the comeback trail ran a sensible leg, followed by evergreen Tony Bird. Luke Vipond ran fourth handing over to John Vaitkunas who brought the team home in third place.

Our Section 6 team, consisting of Dave Featherston, Dave Boyd and Adam Pepper ran notably, but, unfortunately, we lacked a fourth runner on the day to complete their team, despite being in a leading position when Adam finished his leg. It is to be hoped that more athletes will make themselves available in forthcoming weeks so that we don't finish up one runner short of a team again.

The best news from our male competitors came from our underage runners. Our junior athletes performed exceptionally well with two Gold medals and a sixth place, a fantastic result.

Our Under 20 men were victorious following a great run from Andrew White who positioned the team beautifully, passing to Lachlan Aspinall and Adrian Vincent in turn. All ran mightily well and secured first place.

The Under 18 team placed sixth after a fine runs from Alex de Greenlaw, Michael Bourne (recording the fastest lap time for Box Hill) and Nick Bourke.

Our Under 16 team also secured the Gold medal in a thrilling performance. Chris Hamer led off passing to Navin Arunasalam, with Matthew Coloe running even faster than his teammates to anchor Box Hill to another well-deserved win. Many readers might not be aware that many of our junior competitors had run earlier in the day in the APS or the AGS cross country races, and their second race for the day brought great credit on themselves and their club. Well done, boys – a tremendous effort from all of you!!

Cross Country Relay Team Results Brimbank Park, 4 May 2002

Section 1	1 st Leg	2 nd Leg	Total	Leader	B.H. Time	Position
Marcus Tierney	10:11	10:43	20:54	19:57	20:54	5 th
John Meagher	10:27	10:42	21:09	39:48	42:03	2 nd
Graeme Olden	10:54	11:04	21:58	62:00	64:01	4 th
Barry Lynch	10:57	11:37	22:34	82:52	86:35	5 th
Hamish McElwee	10:30	10:45	21:15	103:37	107:50	5 th
Chris O'Connor	11:31	11:31	22:48	124:09	130:38	5 th

Team Results (Unofficial – running watch)

1. Glen Huntly 124:09
2. Doncaster 126:23
3. Ballarat YCW 127:15
4. Geelong Regional Centre 128:26
- 5. Box Hill 130:38**
6. APS

Leading contenders:

- | | |
|-----------------|-------|
| Lee Troop | 19:32 |
| Simon Field | 19:51 |
| Julian Dwyer | 19:57 |
| Shane Nankervis | 20:02 |

Section 3

- | | | | |
|----------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Liam Rourke | 11:31 | 11:45 | 23:16 |
| Sam Hassett | 11:24 | 12:12 | 23:36 |
| Tony Bird | 11:53 | 12:13 | 24:06 |
| Luke Vipond | 12:06 | 12:18 | 24:24 |
| John Vaitkunas | 13:01 | 13:12 | 26:13 |

3rd Box Hill

Section 6

Dave Featherston	13:35	14:06	27:41
Dave Boyd	14:48	15:27	30:15
Adam Pepper	12:43	13:41	26:24

Leading when no fourth runner was available

U/20

Andrew White	10:37 + 11:01	21:38
Lachlan Aspinall		23:12
Adrian Vincent		22:32

1st Box Hill**U/18**

Alex de Greenlaw	12:03
Michael Bourne	11:49
Nick Bourke	12:16

6th Box Hill**U/16**

Chris Hamer	11:26
Navin Arunasalam	11:26
Matthew Coloe	11:08

1st Box Hill

SATURDAY, MAY 3 WERRIBEE CROSS COUNTRY RELAYS WOMEN

Box Hill entered 3 senior women's teams and 2 junior women's teams in the first AV event for the winter, the cross country relays at Werribee equestrian centre.

Our teams were weakened by the absence of Fiona Turner and the last minute withdrawal of Nikki Chapple, due to a foot injury. This meant some late changes to the teams, with the selectors making a few mistakes (!) as some of our division 3 runners out-performed some of those in division 1.

Alison Stokes ran the first leg against some very tough opposition. Glenhuntly with a team that included Susie Power, Anna Thompson and Emma Carney cleared out from the start to win the event. Knox, Malvern and Peninsula Road Runners also had very fast first leg runners and battled for the minor medals, while Box Hill, Ringwood, Geelong and Melbourne Uni fought out places 5 to 8 with the other teams trailing further behind.

Alison was still recovering from running a half marathon the previous week, but despite a dislike for the obstacles on the course, ran the second fastest Box Hill time for the day of 26:55.

George Connell took off in 7th place and ran an outstanding second leg in 25:41 to bring the team up to 5th position. This was George's first serious race in over a year and her strong performance is a great sign for the future. Emily Smith held on to 5th place with three other teams close behind. Megan Sloane battled on well against some very fast last leg runners but slipped back to 8th place just behind the Melbourne University team.

Our two division 3 teams performed well finishing in 3rd and 4th placings. Jessica De Bruin ran the fastest time of our division 3 runners in 27:11, closely followed by Rachel Johnson in 27:17 and Melinda Missen in 27:23, while Amanda Harper, Audra Papworth and Beth Bird were not far behind, running 28:10, 28:12 and 28:43

Division 1	Alison Stokes	26:55
8th	George Connell	25:41
	Emily Smith	27:41
	Megan Sloane	28:23

Division 3		
Team 1	Amanda Harper	28:10
3 rd	Jess De Bruin	27:11
	Melinda Missen	27:23

Team 2	Rachel Johnson	27:17
4th	Audra Papworth	28:12
	Beth Bird	28:43

SATURDAY, MAY 3 WERRIBEE CROSS COUNTRY RELAYS JUNIORS

The Box Hill women's under 16 team ran brilliantly to take the gold medal in their age group at the cross country relays at Werribee. They had a close battle with the Frankston team with all the other clubs finishing more than 4 minutes behind. Sarah Cant ran a great first leg of 11:48 for the 3.4 km distance to take the lead from the start. Sarah Evans ran second and was unable to hold off the Frankston runner and handed over to Hayley Tomlinson in second place, 18 seconds behind the leader. Hayley ran the fastest time of the day to catch and pass the opposition and give Box Hill a victory by 8 seconds. This team also defeated all the under 18 and under 20 teams, a great performance.

The under 20 competition was very close with only 75 seconds covering the first 5 teams at the finish. Alice Baquie jumped up an age group to lead off our under 20 team. Alice ran the good time of 13:00 to bring the team into 3rd place when she handed over to Amy Zagato. Amy having missed some training due to injury, still ran strongly but slipped back to 5th place. Although Jocelyn Keage ran the second fastest anchor leg, she was unable to catch her rivals and brought the team into a close 5th place at the finish.

Under 16	Sarah Cant	11:48
1st	Sarah Evans	14:12
	Hayley Tomlinson	11:43
Under 20	Alice Baquie	13:00
5th	Amy Zagato	14:32
	Jocelyn Keage	12:50