



Brimbank Park Cross Country Championships Saturday 9 July 2011

This the oldest Cross Country race on the calendar dating back over 110 years (formerly the 10 mile Cross Country). For the second year running, the course traversed the very tough Brimbank Park lay out. As winter athletes know, the course runs on river flats and then up one of the most challenging hills in Victorian cross country races. The senior men have to negotiate this hill twice running two 6 km circuits with a shorter 4 km loop completing the course.

Box Hill had a reasonably strong team on paper, and when other clubs including Geelong, Knox and Glenhuntly assembled on the starting line without a full complement of Division 1 athletes, we felt confident of a top three finish. Andrew White has not been competing this season, with an Achilles injury, and he is recuperating. However, with Matt Coloe back for the time being, plus Adrian Vincent and John Meagher both ready to race, we had a very good team on paper. Steve Kelly, Daniel Clark, Steve Dinneen and Chris Hamer also reported in so this meant our team at the top end was nearly as strong as it could be.

Once the starting gun was fired by Brendan Ferrari, a group of about ten athletes pulled clear, including two Box Hill runners, Steve Kelly and Chris Hamer. Our athletes immediately headed to the front of the field. Others in this group included Nathan Hartigan (Ball Harr), who took the early lead. Luke Hennessy, Mitchell Brown (Ess), Sean Stevens (KSB) Tyson Popplestone (Eur), Liam Adams (Ess), Dane Verwey (Fra), with David Carver (Geel) not far away from the leaders, Sam Crowther (Knox) was well back, which was a surprise. Steve Dinneen started conservatively with Daniel Clark, Matt Coloe and John Meagher, probably in around 35th to 38th positions. And not far behind them was Adrian Vincent.

Dale Bickham was in the top ninety or so. Bert Pelgrim was in about 100th position, ahead of Andrew Hester, also running well, Daniel Balassone, returning from injury, and Chris O'Connor. Peter Stefanos, Andrew Tunne, Dave Stevens and James Tennant were our other competitors.

After one lap, the leading group had thinned a bit down to five, including Steve Kelly and Chris Hamer. Steve Dinneen was moving through the field and was in roughly 22nd position. Matt Cole was also progressing forward and in the top 30, with Daniel Clark and John Meagher close by. Adrian Vincent looked very strong, as well. At the top of the first hill, the top five runners had cleared away from Nathan Hartigan, and Liam Adams, Mitchell Brown, Steve Kelly and Luke Hennessy were slightly ahead of Chris Hamer, and then there was a clear break to the rest of the field. Tyson Popplestone (Eur) was also coming back to the field.

The teams' race was extremely interesting. Geelong were very depleted, with only three athletes in the top 60. Essendon were clearly ahead, with their sixth athlete in about 25th position, and Box Hill looked to be in the silver medal position, from Glenhuntly. Collingwood looked to be in fourth position, with Frankston and Waverley pretty close together with Geelong. Knox was out of contention. Into the last lap and Liam Adams moved into the lead from Steve Kelly, with Mitchel Brown, close up. Hennessy had dropped back a bit, probably 100 metres, and Chris Hamer, who was running fifth, was making ground on him. Steve Dinneen had picked up fifteen or so places and was in sixth position, some distance behind Chris Hamer. Hartigan and Verwey had settled into seventh and eighth positions respectively, from Stevens and de Luca (APS). Liam Adams extended his lead over the field to record a victory, with Brown passing Kelly after the top of the hill, and holding second place until the line. Luke Hennessy got going again to hold off Chris Hamer, with Steve

Dinneen placing 6th. Matt Coloe pushed forward to run 21st, picking up four places in the last lap. Adrian Vincent performed at his very best to record 27th position. This was probably his best ever run in an AV championship. Daniel Clark placed 30th and John Meagher was a further 11 seconds back in 33rd position. Bert Pelgrim ran home in 90th position, which shows he is nearly recovered from the nasty injuries that he sustained in an accident earlier in the year. Dale Bickham completed the course in 121st position and found the second half of the course tough. Andrew Hester placed 124th, with Daniel Balassone 134th and Chris O'Connor in 162nd position, completing the Division 2 team. Peter Stefanos was around 254th, whilst Dave Stevens placed around 290th and Andrew Tunne came about 293rd. James Tennant also completed the course but there was a malfunction of the electronic recording device, and he did not appear on the finishing list.

Our Under 20 men performed very well in the combined junior race with Michael Dowel coming 5th, Will Potter, 6th, Tyler Agius, 15th, Samuel Mackie, 24th and Mitchell Milnes 41st. Team results have not been published yet, but it does appear highly likely that the U/20 Box Hill team may have won the team's section.

The women's race was a one-sided affair, with Kaila McKnight getting away from the field early in the race and exposing the lack of depth in the field. She is clearly in good form and was selected to be a team member of the World Athletic Championships national team recently. Tessa Craig was the runner-up, with Amanda Paulin placing third. Box Hill fielded two teams, and the Division one team members acquitted themselves well, with Julie Norney running 23rd, June Petrie, 27th, Rachel Johnson, 46th and Amanda Harper, 50th. Their race was held over one 6 kilometre lap.

The Division 1 women's team finished sixth. Other Box Hill female athletes to finish were Hannah Deal, who ran strongly to place 58th, Rebecca Law, 79th, Megan Sloane, 110th, Neetha Pai, 130th, and Charmaine McNally, 135th.

We had a number of competitors in Junior Women's races, including Zoe Schwerkolt, Amelia Savige, Penny Townshend and Brigitte Wolhunter.

Box Hill is in second place in the Men's Division 1 season ladder behind Geelong and our Division 1 Women's team is in fifth place behind Glenhuntly.

Placings

Men's 16 K Cross Country (unofficial)

1.	Liam Adams	Ess	51:31
2.	Mitchel Brown	Ess	52:21
3.	Steve Kelly	BH	52:46
4.	Luke Hennessy	GH	52:51
5	Chris Hamer	BH	53:15
6	Steve Dinneen	BH	54:05
7.	Nathan Hartigan	Ball Harr	54:21
8.	Dane Verwey	Frank	54:24
9.	Sean Stevens	KSB	54:38
10.	Mark de Luca	APS	54:47
21.	Mat Coloe	BH	56:12
27.	Adrian Vincent	BH	57:16
30.	Daniel Clark	BH	57:50
33.	John Meagther	BH	58:01
90.	Bert Pelgrim	BH	62:13
121.	Dale Bickham	BH	64:44
124.	Andrew Hester	BH	65:13

134.	Daniel Balassone	BH	65:57
162.	Chris O'Connor	BH	68:23
252?	Peter Stefanos	BH	74:42
290?	Dave Stevens	BH	82:01
293?	Andrew Tunne	BH	83:37
	James Tennant	BH	

Division 1 Team Placings (Unofficial)

1.	Essendon	69
2.	Box Hill	82
3.	Glenhuntly	140
4.	Collingwood	248
5.	Geelong	292
6.	Frankston	294
7.	Waverley	294

Men's under 20/Under 18/Under 16 6 K Championship

1.	Kane Grimster	Fra	19:38
2.	Anthony Aloisio	APS	19:40
3.	Jordan Nelson	Knox	19:52
4.	Ryan Geard	Ess	20:21
5.	Michael Dowel	BH	20:27
6.	William Potter	BH	20:40
15.	Tyler Agius	BH	21:47
24.	Samuel Mackie	BH	22:17
41.	Mitchell Milnes	BH	23:46

Women's 6 K Championship

1.	Kaila McKnight	Knox	21:30
2.	Tessa Craig	Inv	21:55
3.	Amanda Paulin	Inv	22:31
4.	Melissa Duncan	Knox	22:42
5.	Ellie O'Kane	Geel	22:50
6.	Erica Fountain	GH	22:53
7.	Sophie Barker	Melb Uni	22:59
8.	Beverley Thomas	Ess	23:17
9.	Kate Seibold-Crosbie	Knox	23:31
10.	Susie Michaelsson	Coll	23:33
23	Julie Norney	BH	24:46
27.	June Petrie	BH	24:56
46.	Rachel Johnson	BH	26:16
50.	Amanda Harper	BH	26:38
59.	Hannah Deal	BH	26:55
79.	Rebecca Law	BH	28:00
110.	Megan Sloane	BH	29:45
130.	Neetha Pai	BH	31:23
135.	Charmaine McNally	BH	31:46

Division 1 Women's placings

1.	Knox	38
2.	Essendon	63
3.	Glenhuntly	86
4.	Geelong	96
5.	Melb Uni	112
6.	Box Hill	146

Under 20 4 K Championship

Penny Townshend BH 18:00

Under 16/Under 18 6 K Championships

27 Brigitte Wolhunter BH 29:56

37 Amelia Savige BH 32:13

Under 14 6 K Championship

Zoe Schwerkolt BH 16:50