

# **Winchester & District Athletic Club Race Report**

## **Hampshire Cross Country League, Sat 5<sup>th</sup> December 2009**

A new venue at Popham Airfield, near Basingstoke, greeted runners of all ages for the 3<sup>rd</sup> fixture of the Hampshire Cross Country League Season. Held on fields just behind the main runway, which also included a section of woodland, the venue proved a great success and with its deceptive hills and grassland that in sections turned quite quickly to mud, this made for some great racing.

The senior women's race was a real cut and thrust affair as U17 Ruth Haynes and then U20 Louise Small, both of Aldershot, Farnham & District A.C. each looked to be set to win the race outright before the experience of Winchester & District A.C. veteran Lucy Elliott (17.34), won the day as she stormed away in the last 600m to climax an exciting finish to a thrilling race. Aldershot's packing led them to team victory, with Winchester a fine 2<sup>nd</sup>, as fellow veteran Michaela McCallum 10<sup>th</sup> (18.54) and Emma Patel 26<sup>th</sup> (20.07) scored for the Club. A fine display by the Club included Sue True 29<sup>th</sup> (20.12), Clare Knapton 31<sup>st</sup> (20.31), Jo Jefferies 32<sup>nd</sup> (20.35), Sandra Bowers 47<sup>th</sup> (21.17) and Madeline Vosser 79<sup>th</sup> (23.40) out of a field of 110 finishers. This leaves the senior women's team 2<sup>nd</sup> and the veteran team in a very strong position, having won each of the 3 events this term, with 2 fixtures left.

A stronger than anticipated men's field of 256 finishers contested the senior men's race and at the sharp end, Winchester were very much to the fore with U20 Tom Anderson (24.25) and Gavin Smith (24.42) amongst those forcing the pace. They finished 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> respectively and with Andy Greenleaf (25.02) returning from a recent broken collar bone in a fine 10<sup>th</sup> spot, this set the team up for 3<sup>rd</sup> place on the day and as reigning champions, they currently lie 4<sup>th</sup>, just 2 points adrift of 2<sup>nd</sup> team Bournemouth A.C. Matt West (27.15) 56<sup>th</sup>, Matt Revier (27.18) 61<sup>st</sup> and Julian Mann (27.20) 63<sup>rd</sup> had their own battle for the remaining 2 scoring places in the team. Behind them, the Club's leading veteran Franklyn Young (28.17) was 82<sup>nd</sup>, as he led home Will Hadley 91<sup>st</sup> (28.40), and veterans Dave Kennedy 110<sup>th</sup> (29.18), Paul Stoodley 150<sup>th</sup> (30.46), David Vosser 153<sup>rd</sup> (30.56), Mark Lyne 160<sup>th</sup> (31.15), Derek Smith 190<sup>th</sup> (32.40), Ian Leedham 201<sup>st</sup> (33.24), Stephen Oliver 220<sup>th</sup> (34.29) and Ken Hardcastle 243<sup>rd</sup> (38.11). Winchester's men now head the 16 strong Clubs that make up the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division in the veteran rankings and with such a strong squad do look well placed to stay there.

Winchester's juniors continue to gain in confidence and it was the under 13 girls who commenced the days events. Hannah Knapton's excellent form continued with a well judged race and strong finish for 3<sup>rd</sup> place, Rosie Upton also produced her best of the season to date for 7<sup>th</sup>. Completing the A team was Klara Lyne in 9<sup>th</sup> closely followed by newcomer Emily Stoodley in 10<sup>th</sup>. Maddy Donald 20<sup>th</sup> and Imogen Emmett 33<sup>rd</sup> completed the clubs entrants. The Team were delighted to take 2<sup>nd</sup> place only 4 points behind Team Southampton.

The Under 13 Boys produced the best performance of the day winning the Team event with Calum Upton sprinting to the finish to hold on to 2<sup>nd</sup> supported by Jason Haw 9<sup>th</sup> and Ben Dunford 12<sup>th</sup>. In total a record ten under 13 boys competed for Winchester finishing and their positions were as follows (Charles McLaughlin 17<sup>th</sup>, Rory McCallum 20<sup>th</sup>, Will Stafford 23<sup>rd</sup>, Scott Barker 34<sup>th</sup>, Charlie Maw 35<sup>th</sup>, Matt South 64<sup>th</sup> and G Forster 75<sup>th</sup>).

Rebecca Knapton ran a commanding race in the under 15 girls, leading from the start and winning comfortably with Georgia Morris recording her best ever finish in 6<sup>th</sup>, a close battle for the 3<sup>rd</sup> counter followed with Jess Maw (21<sup>st</sup>) just catching Hannah Jennings (23<sup>rd</sup>) in the finishing straight ensuring that the Team gained an excellent 2<sup>nd</sup> place.

Stuart McCallum made a strong return to form finishing a fine 7<sup>th</sup> place supported by Jack Walker who used his strength at the finish to move up 2 places in the home straight to take 12<sup>th</sup> place.

The under 17 Women's race proved one of the most exciting of the day, with two Winchester athletes challenging for the lead throughout. Jade Bowling led the team home in a personal best 3<sup>rd</sup> place with Jen McLachlan finishing closely behind in 5<sup>th</sup> place. Newcomer Victoria Stoodley completed the A team finishing 14<sup>th</sup> followed by Sarah Lawson also competing over the country for the first time in 15<sup>th</sup> place.

Winchester's athletes are now focussing on the forthcoming Hampshire Championships which will be held at Fleming Park on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> January.