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Alan Newman's reports appear in the KM every Friday

KENT CROSS COUNTRY LEAGUE

Senior Men

An extraordinarily selfless act of sportsmanship will be long remembered by Tom Collins (Medway and Maidstone) and many who witnessed the manner of his victory in the Kent Men's cross-country league race at Sparrows Den, West Wickham on Saturday, writes Alan Newman.

Collins emerged from the pack and with powerful running on the relentless hills at this venue had prized a narrow gap over 2010 Kent champion, Dean Lacy (Cambridge Harriers), when he missed the final turn towards the finish.

Lacy assumed the lead role with Collins in pursuit but as the finish line arrived he handed the race win to the bemused league leader by jogging the final metres. The official result shows a margin of two seconds in Collins' favour but does not convey the unusual circumstances of the race.

Third-placed Dominic Brown (under-20) played his part in the breakaway group and was rewarded with a best ever third place to lead Tonbridge to team success on the day and overall.

Adam Wright (Cambridge Harriers) was another junior in top form and his fourth place set his club up for runners-up spot behind Tonbridge and ahead of Medway and Maidstone, who now look unlikely to retain their team trophy.

The top six was completed by Sam Coombes (Dartford Harriers) and Ben Tyler (M&M) but four of the next five places went to Tonbridge's Corey De'ath, Julian Rendall, Dan Bradley and Chris Olley. Previous race winner, Michael Coleman (South Kent Harriers, 8th) was the sole interloper in this group.

The higher age group leaders were M45 Richard Tomlinson (M&M, 21st), M50 Andy Howey (Tonbridge Wells Harriers, 31st), M55 Steve Smythe (Cambridge Harriers, 69th) and M60 Alan Newman (Paddock Wood, 122nd).

With just the final race remaining at Parkwood School, Swanley on February 8 the balance of power has swung in favour of Tonbridge at four and twelve-to-score with a two match points advantage over Medway and Maidstone.

Young Athletes

The Kent Young Athletes cross-country league concluded on Saturday at Sparrows Den after four races to determine the trophy winners this winter.

In a more open season than usual Tonbridge AC were the most successful club with two team wins in the male races and two in the females.

Blackheath and Bromley Harriers finished strongly claiming two titles and the other team winners were Invicta East Kent and Beech Grove Academy. There were 243 athletes present for the league final and a record total of 424 runners have competed over the season.

Michael Eagling (Blackheath) confirmed his under-13 boys' title with five seconds to spare over team-mate Peter Guy and Alex Kavanagh (Thanet). Isaac Milham (M&M) secured third overall with fourth place in the final race. Blackheath are the league champions from holders Tonbridge and M&M.

Alasdair Kinloch (Tonbridge) held the only unbeaten record in the league to retain his under-15 title ahead of Jamie Goodge (Tonbridge). Jake Berry (M&M) was third on the day but third overall went to Marco Arcuri (B&B). Tonbridge held onto their team trophy from Blackheath and Beech Grove.

Will Fuller (B&B) swept to the under-17 award by winning the final race from Chris Cohen (Tonbridge) and Richard Webb (B&B). Webb was awarded the league silver medal ahead of Cohen after a tie on points was resolved by a two second time differential overall – it was that close. Tonbridge, Blackheath and Invicta East Kent were the leading teams.

James West (Tonbridge) stormed to victory by 43 seconds in the under-20 race. William Ruiz (B&B) and league champion Philip Huleatt (Beech Grove) were the runners-up. Beech Grove Academy retained their team award from Tonbridge.

Millie Smith (B&B) took her third consecutive race win by five seconds to claim the under-13 girls' title. Kelsi Cornish, Katie Burgess and Ellen Crombie secured the team award for Tonbridge from holders Blackheath and Invicta.

Sabrinha Sinha (Cambridge Harriers) added a third race victory in the under-15s from Jessica Keene (B&B) and Holly Page (Dartford Harriers). Fourth placed Naomi Kingston (B&B) is league champion from team mates Yasmin Austridge and Kelsey Fuss and Blackheath won from Invicta and Tonbridge.

The under-17s race reflected the final league positions with Niamh Bridson-Hubbard (B&B) heading Amy Old (Invicta) and Sian Driscoll (Tonbridge) across the line. Invicta are team champions from Blackheath and Tonbridge.

Ruth Bourne (Tonbridge) was a clear winner of the jointly held under-20 race from Kate Curran (B&B) and Alice Wood (Tonbridge). Cassie Benson (Dartford Harriers) was rewarded for her consistency with the individual trophy from Bethany Frost (B&B) and Bourne.

Full results at www.kcaa.org.uk

Alan Newman