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### **Alan Newman's reports appear in the KM every Friday**

#### **KENT CROSS COUNTRY LEAGUE FINAL, SWANLEY**

The Kent Cross Country League 2013/14 season concluded at Parkwood School, Swanley on Saturday with the final races for senior and veteran men and women, writes Alan Newman. There were 325 men and 178 women competing this winter, which is slightly up on last season.

Tom Collins (Medway and Maidstone) finally took the men's title after several years within sight of the summit. Alice Heather-Hayes (Tunbridge Wells Harriers) maintained the masters' hold on the women's trophy following the success of W45 Tina Oldershaw (Paddock Wood) last winter.

#### **Senior Men**

The 2011-12 men's champion, Dean Lacy (Cambridge Harriers), won the final race of the 2013-14 league at Parkwood School, Swanley on Saturday but it was the consistent Tom Collins (Medway and Maidstone) who took a well deserved first individual title, writes Alan Newman.

Collins was never off the rostrum in four races after starting his season with a win in the opening match at Swanley Park last October. Lacy gifted his rival a second win at Sparrows Den, Hayes in November after Collins had lost his way near to the finish but there were no such issues in the final encounter as Lacy raced to victory by eight seconds.

Julian Rendall (Tonbridge) was a further eight seconds in arrears as he led his well drilled squad to team success at both four and twelve-to-score.

Under-20 juniors Adam Wright (Cambridge Harriers) and defending league champion Adam Gilbert (M&M) were the next to finish ahead of Tim Corby (Invicta East Kent). Tom Cox (7th), Jamie Bryant (U20, 8th) and James Taylor (13th) were all crucial to the Tonbridge team success over perennial rivals, Medway and Maidstone.

Chris Minns (M40 Beckenham, 15th) and Richard Tomlinson (M45 M&M, 16th ) were the leading master athletes among 127 finishers and the age group league champions were M40 Jim Addison (Beckenham), M50 Kevin Williams (Ashford) and M60 Gerald Baron (Larkfield).

The over-70 men compete on a shorter course with the women and the league champion was the only man to run in all four races, Bryon Taylor, of Tunbridge Wells Harriers.

## Senior Women

Youth led the way in the Kent Women's League race at Swanley, with 26-year-old Elaine Rayner of Blackheath and Bromley Harriers winning a close race with under-20 junior Nicole Taylor (Tonbridge) by five seconds.

Alice Heather-Hayes (W35, Tunbridge Wells Harriers) was clear in third to take both the Cliff Temple individual and Ron Hale masters' trophies. Amy Clements (Kent AC) was fourth ahead of Dani Chattenton (U20), who led Medway and Maidstone to team success on the day and overall.

Emily McKane (U20, Invicta) completed a first full season with the seniors and was rewarded with second overall in the individual league table.

Medway and Maidstone's final match form was crucial, with Hannah Miller and Louise Knight chasing Jennie Butler (Blackheath) across the line in the top ten to secure narrow victories over Blackheath at both three and six-to-score. This allowed M&M to regain the trophy from Blackheath by two points.

**Alan Newman**