



HERNE HILL HARRIERS **HIGHLIGHTS**

November 2024

Welcome to your monthly Newsletter – I hope you enjoy it. Athletes, coaches, team managers if you have any photos and achievements you would like include in future issues, please email me: glenkeeganhhh@gmail.com

**London Gold and Silver for Lucy
and Sophie as Herne Hill claim
2nd team award**



A relatively mild Saturday saw the 2024 London Cross Country Championships at Parliament Hill Fields, over the same iconic undulating terrain which will be the scene of this season's English National Cross-Country Championships in February 2025.

For the second successive Saturday the Herne Hill Harriers women's A team were second, and men's A team placed fifth in big competitions.

The women's squad added to their growing collection of team and individual medals. In their 6km race Lucy Jones and Sophie Tooley underlined strong form as they ran away from the field of 217 finishers to finish first and second.

Jones was first across a finish line for a third time in three November Saturdays so far, with a clear victory by 44 seconds. Tooley in second place has stepped up to another level during the last month and here the 25-year-old claimed an excellent silver medal with her best race so far as a senior athlete.

This pairing led the Harriers women to team silver medals, with the other two team scorers being Jenny Nandi in 15th and Shannon Sinclair 29th. They were backed up by Ella Newton 66th and Jess Winfield 133rd as the club's fine women's team season continues unabated.

In the men's 10km race in-form Herne Hill based Australian Brandon Dewar placed fourth, another fine run after his fifth place in the Surrey League seven days earlier.

Andrew Clarke showed a return towards his best in 10th place with Daniel Shaw close behind in 17th. M45 Ben Millar closed the scoring quarter in 70th.

The men's turnout was completed by Alex Lee 71st, Fintan Kearney 93rd, Stephen McLeod 110th, Jamie Brown 124th, Craig Duncan 191st, M55 Norman Urquia 244th, William Oliver 273rd, M55 Jonathan Ratcliffe 306th, Leon Kong 345th and another M55 Andrew Simms was 349th. **Geoff Jerwood**

**HHH women are Southern Cross
Relay champions!**



Following on from the epic team win that made club history with their first National Road Relay Championships success a fortnight ago, the senior women from Herne Hill Harriers went to Wormwood Scrubs on Saturday determined to add the title of South of England Cross Country Relay champions to their early season portfolio.

The main opposition looked likely to be London neighbours Belgrave Harriers,

who had won the opening Surrey League fixture a week earlier and host club Thames Valley Harriers, who had won bronze medals behind Herne Hill's road relays victory.

On the day it proved to be a head to head between Belgrave and Herne Hill throughout two of the three legs of 3km around the park before Lucy Jones ran away from her rival with a strong anchor leg. The first leg saw Sophie Tooley produce her best run since her track PBs during the summer as after leading out at the start she then tracked the Belles runner and refused to give in to all attempts to shake her off. Tooley handed over at the end of her stint just behind the lead and her time of 10:08 turned out to be the third fastest overall.

The third and fourth-placed teams were already a good distance behind. Darcie Hey went straight into the lead on the second stage, running strongly and looked to have created a small gap – only for her pursuer to close her down in the final 200m. Hey clocked a good 10:23 to give Jones a small advantage to take into her leg. The latter soon pulled away into a good lead and with a dominant display of running brought the team home with a winning margin on 23 seconds. With the only individual time under 10 minutes, Jones was also the fastest of the day with 9:59.

The U15 boys also claimed a set of bronze medals. Although again a little upstaged by the women, the team was missing Caspian Holmes from the silver medal winning national road relay team.

They each performed superbly around their 2km lap. Zachary Morris ran 6:56 for ninth place on the first leg, then Tommy Clerkin moved into third place with 6:45 before Leau Roch held on to the podium position with 6:49.

Harriers had three teams finish in fourth place. The U13 girls came closest to the podium, only four seconds behind the third team. Isobel Carter was sixth on the opening leg with 8:14, then Marnie Millar moved up to fourth on the next leg with 8:11. Skyla O'Brien finished tantalisingly just behind the girl ahead of her with 8:02.

The U13 boys were also only eight seconds shy of winning team medals with Josiah Aldham starting them off in eighth with 7:46. Henry Kucerov moved right into contention for a place on the rostrum as he handed over in third with his 7:35 split. John Reynolds found his 7:45 was not quite enough to hold on to third and had to give way in an exciting battle.

The U20 men were encouragingly good in an age group where athlete retention can become a significant challenge.

Fabien Whitelock is an exciting talent and his first leg run of 9:20 for their 3km lap saw him in third place. Mori Alimi lost a couple of positions with 9:38 as he handed over to Charlie Wood in fifth place. Wood moved back up to fourth at the finish with 9:47 and was 18 seconds behind third place and had the same time gap ahead of fifth.

The U17 women finished 11th with Sophie Jack running a good opening leg around their 3km circuit in 11:24 handing over in 11th place.

The team was completed by Martha Brennan, who gained one place with her 12:11 and Maeve Minielly who clocked 11:50 to anchor the team home.

The U15 boys B team finished 11th behind their medal-winning club mates. The team comprised James Clements-Nash 12th in 6:59, Noah Turner 11th in 7:14 and Luca Boulton holding that position with 7:12.

The senior men placed 13th in their relay of four stages of 4km each, through the efforts of Chris Speed 26th in 15:46, M50 Simon Coombes 16th in 14:55, another M50 Deron Fagan holding 16th with 15:36 and Ryan Willmott gaining three places with 15:08.

An U13 girls B team finished 15th courtesy of Isobel McLennan 13th in 8:43, Anneke Walker 14th in 9:26 and Cataleya Holmes 9:22.

The U17 men were 17th in their race with Jack McLennan 19th in 10:15, Alfie Bryan 19th in 10:45 and Raphael Lerner 17th in 10:11.

The club teams now look forward to the National Cross Country Relay Championships in Mansfield's Berry Hill Park on 2nd November. **Geoff Jerwood**

Two P's in a Pod – Turkish Delight as Poppy & Phoebe in GB Team for Euro Cross



Herne Hill Harriers are celebrating their latest female distance-running internationals after Poppy Craig-McFeely and Phoebe Anderson were both selected for the Great Britain team for the European Cross Country Championships in Antalya, Turkey on Sunday, December 8.

Like most of the country, Liverpool's Sefton Park saw very inclement weather due to Storm Bert over the weekend. Here Craig-McFeely battled to a fabulous fourth place in the U23 women's race at the British Athletics Cross Challenge European Trials on Saturday November 23.

This performance earned her an automatic qualifying spot on the GB team in this age group. For the 20-year-old student, the current cross country team captain at Cambridge University, her selection is the culmination of a long, tortuous return to training and competition since suffering a stress fracture 18 months ago and just reward for her resilience and persistence.

Meanwhile, over in the USA, a high-quality NCAA Nationals final in Madison, Wisconsin saw Anderson placed 26th. She was thereby named an NCAA Cross Country All-American for the second successive year.

Her excellent race caps another great season of US collegiate competition and her overall performance levels saw her added to the Great Britain team for Turkey as a discretionary pick alongside Craig-McFeely.

This will be the first time the club has had two athletes in Team GB in the same event at any major championship. Both can look forward to this with pride and anticipation. **Geoff Jerwood**

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