

## Scottish Cross Country Championships

Falkirk 19/2/2011

Referee's Report

Ron Morrison

This year we were blessed with a dryish spell of weather during the Championships given that there was heavy rain before and after. The going was at best soft turning muddy in the latter races. Despite an overcast day and the temperature remaining at about 5C it was still a great day for cross country running.

Overall I cannot remember such an incident free Championship.

### Pre Race Action

- 1 The entries team have their job down to a fine art ensuring that all athletes are members of SAL and that all are running in the correct age group. The following entries were moved from the Senior Men to Junior Men.

633 James Waldie Edinburgh University

634 Andrew Smith St Andrews University

635 Stephen Donoghue Glasgow University

All requests to run in an out-of-age race were handled by the entries team and refused.

- 2 The pre-race publicity left something to be desired given that this is the major event of the cross country calendar. The pre-race report was only circulated, after prompting from the Secretary, on the evening of Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> and contained errors. I asked for these to be corrected and more added on the age group races. A revised report (unproofed) was put on the SAL web site early on Friday morning but contained further errors that were picked up by various chat groups. Immediately after the report was put up 2 further items were loaded to push the report down the list. **We need to improve on the pre-race publicity of this race.**
- 3 Entries for the Championships were slightly down on last year from 1878 to 1799. This mostly arises in the U13 and U15 age groups which must be of some concern. **Most encouragingly the entries in the U17W (82), U20W (45) and Senior Women (281) were all records.**

### On the Day

- 1 Assistant Referee David Cairns walked the course while I concentrated on the start/finish area. We both agreed that the course set up was excellent as was the branding for the title and Grand Prix sponsor, Stewarts. The SAL staff, led by Ross Cunningham, volunteers and Falkirk Victoria Harriers are to be congratulated for the slickness of this operation. A special presentation was made, prior to the Women's Championship, to Jim Young and Bob Reid for their many years of service in setting up courses.
- 2 After last year it was good to see the new SAL CEO, Nigel Holl, in attendance for the whole day. The SAL Chair, Frank Dick, also managed the Men's Championship after being held up in London.
- 3 The team manager from Nairn AAC approached me at the start of the meeting to explain that they had travelled without all their running vests. I took a note of

the numbers and gave permission for the athletes to run in a T-shirt with the number.

- 4 The Shettleston Harriers team manager for the senior women's race found number 592 Laura Murray missing from the entry pack. I gave her permission to wear the unused 595 number which I changed by pen to 592 and initialled with instructions that she tell the recorders. It does not seem to have worked as 595 Christine Patterson finished in 77 place. **This should be corrected in the results.**
- 5 The rule change of having 4 to count in the Senior women' team race, introduced in 2010, had a significant impact on the team result this year.
- 6 The start/finish area worked very well. We have a very experienced, if aging, collection of officials who operate very efficiently. The funnels operated well with a suggestion from the recorders at the end of the funnels that the funnels be curved so that they have a better view of what is in the funnel. Indeed despite the number of finishers mostly only 1 funnel was used in any race.
- 7 An athlete from Hunters Bog T wearing number 400 Richard Wall finished in 447<sup>th</sup> place in the senior Men's race. **It was not Dick Wall.**
- 8 In the Senior Men's race the number 77 is recorded twice in 102<sup>nd</sup> and 337<sup>th</sup> place by both sets of recorders and verified by the tape recording. Number 77 was Alan Fotheringham of Carnegie Harriers who would be expected to finish in the first 100. That was left in the results and the other position deleted.  
**The only other number 77 issued on the day was to Ross Gray an U13 Boy from Inverclyde who finished in the U13 race.**
- 9 The experiment of using 3 announcers on the day worked well. One announcer covered the start with the referee and the starter, the second concentrated on the presentation on the field and the third on the finish and the on course commentary.
- 10 The doctor at the First Aid tent reported that there had been no serious injuries during the day and only a few people treated for minor complaints.

#### **Post Race**

- 1 This year the results team have stopped selling results on the day because they can put them on the web almost instantly. This is very efficient and looks very professional.

However as of Monday morning the race report is still not on the SAL web site. This is less impressive.