

Scottish Cross Country Relay Championships
Cumbernauld 23/10/2010
Referee's Report
Ron Morrison

Overall

- 1 The 2010 National Cross Country Championships provided another great day of cross country running. There were record entries in the YAF field and near record fields in the other races. Almost everything worked well with the experienced teams of officials co-ordinating in the manner that they have done for years. There are always a few problems in such a complex set races. I mention these later but I was pleased with the manner in which the officials dealt with them.
- 2 As I said last year, one of the most important aspects at Cumbernauld is the weather and in this respect we were very lucky again. Indeed it turned into the most beautiful of autumn days with bright sunshine and even some heat in the air.
- 3 The course was soft but fair and well marked. The finish area was well constructed with the usual funnels and the start area set out with a slight variation from last year to handle the problems of large numbers. **This is an excellent course that we should retain if possible.**
- 3 All races started on time as advertised on the programme. The announcers, marksmen and starter combined well. The starts themselves caused no problems as the starting grid was large enough to cope with the numbers.
- 4 The recording of results was excellent both in times and places and coped well with the overlap at the end of the Men's and Women's races.
- 5 The on-course catering was again very good and served cheerfully.
- 6 The first-aid team were well placed for action and easily contactable.
- 7 The results were produced efficiently and available on the SAL website early in the evening.
- 8 This year the announcers were provided with a running order of the athletes.
- 9 I think the message of not running more than once and not substituting athletes is beginning to get though to Clubs.

Minor Issues

- 8 The most difficult part of these Championships is the take-overs. Andy Law (Changeover Chief) devised a method of catering for the large numbers which did not work as well as expected in the early races. He then adapted it so that one official with field glasses announced the incoming numbers, another official released the outgoing runner from the holding pen into the start area to be set off by the starting official. **This worked very well especially in the senior races.**
One of the problems with the younger athletes is that they do not concentrate on the changeover and at least one (140 Fife AC – YAM) missed his start point by

a long way and decided not to run. **We should emphasise to clubs to teach their athletes the procedure.**

Towards the end of the Men's race outgoing 3 leg teams were separated from the outgoing 4 leg teams and started a separate official from the main start area. **This again worked well and avoided confusion.**

- 8 Over the years we have adopted a mechanism to allow athletes who are entered but for one reason or another cannot run in a complete team to take part without counting in the race.

The procedure is that the athlete reports to the Referee who instructs them to remove their number and to report to the start official who will set them off in a position that does not interfere with the race. They are instructed to drop out before the finish. A number of athletes were allowed to run on this basis either being started by myself or the Assistant Referee, Dave Cairns.

- 9 We have a method of identifying Women's Masters teams as they enter the finishing funnel so that the medals can be presented on the field. This requires Team Managers to clearly mark the competition number with a large "V" which also serves to let other teams identify Masters teams in the race. This was not done well by the team managers this year and led to the presentation of the 3rd place medals to Carnegie H instead of Bellahouston H. Also Fife AC did not turn up for the presentation of the Men's medals as they counted themselves in 4th place according to the "V"s. Clearly we cannot depend on Team Managers to mark the number so **I suggest declaration officials do this or we do not present the medals on the field as the computer works out the result correctly. I prefer the former and also think we could present the Men's trophies and medals on the field.**

- 10 The place recorders requested that in future a sterile area is built around them to stop interference with finishing runners.

- 11 The Men's declaration sheet contained only 3 spaces instead of 4 for athletes. The declaration officials dealt with this.

- 12 For some reason this year the speakers for the music/announcers were placed behind the officials. This made it difficult for them to communicate. While we did get the volume turned down, it would be better to relocate the speakers to a position in front of the officials as has been done in previous years.

- 13 Given the distance from the car park to the start **we should give consideration to shuttling the officials to the start position.**

- 14 Anne Lappin spent one hour after the races collecting rubbish left by athletes and teams. **There is a need to emphasise the collection of litter.**