

Lindsay's scottishathletics National Cross Country Championships

Callendar Park Falkirk

Saturday 26th February 2022

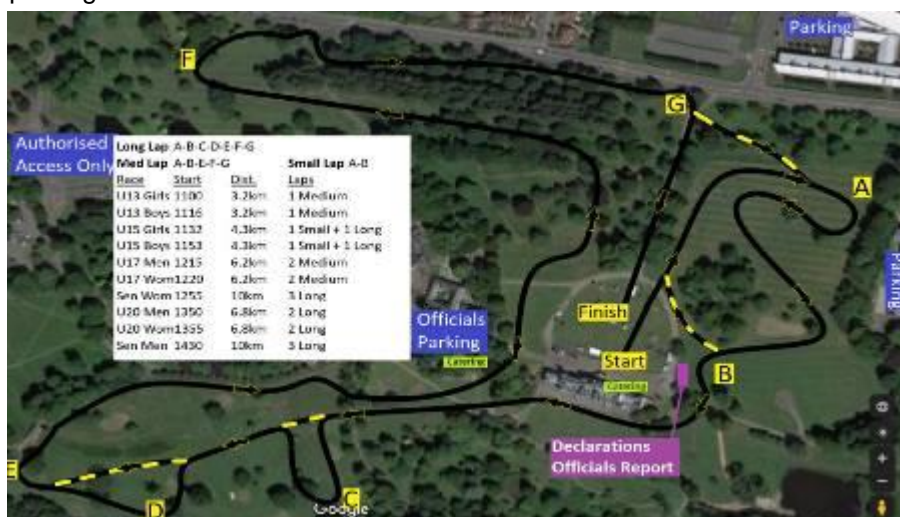
Referee's Report – David Cairns

1. Introduction:

- Following the enforced COVID-19 break from competition in 2021, Falkirk Victoria Harriers again successfully hosted our National Cross Country Championships at Callendar Park in Falkirk.

2. Event Information:

- Competition Information, Course Map, Event Attendee Covid Protocols, Tent & Gazebo Guidelines, Final Event Information and Entries List were posted on **scottishathletics** website.
- On-line Entries only, no entries on the day.
- There were no indoor changing facilities at Graeme High School but toilets were available there. Portaloos and catering were available at the course, adjacent to the Start/Finish.
- Chip collection and Officials report located in Registration Marquee adjacent to the start.
- Parking, including coach parking at Graeme High School, with overflow parking at the business centre at the east end of Callendar Park and also at the west end of the Park. Officials parking was located to the west of Callendar House.



Course Map & Timetable

3. Health & Safety:

- The Event Management Plan incorporated Event Risk Assessment covering general event risks and additional risks relating to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.
- There was no First Aid Risk Assessment provided.
- scottishathletics** COVID-19 Protocols included request to maintain 1m Physical Distancing and a reminder to Event Attendees that “*everyone is expected to wear a face covering whilst indoors*”.
- Presentation of medals and trophies were all in the open air immediately after each race.
- scottishathletics** Club Tents and Gazebo “DO and DON'T” guidance was provided.

4. Medical & First Aid:

- First Aid cover was provided by Amvale Medical.
- There were no major First Aid incidents with two ankle strains and a hand injury reported.

5. Weather:

- After a recent wet spell, with snow earlier in the week, conditions on the day were generally fair and mild, with a light SSW wind and favourable to competition.

6. Club Tents & Gazebos:

An area was allocated to the west of the finish for club tents.

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7. The Start:

- The start was located in front of Callendar House with a short flat approach to a short hill which served to reduce the density of runners before reaching the main course.
- Although the width of the start line was restricted by a cordoned off area of recent standing water in front of Callendar House the start worked well for the junior races. However, it was noted that a wider start might be more appropriate for the senior races. Some minor adjustment within the constraints of the existing set up were therefore made immediately before the senior races. All appeared to work satisfactorily with no observed trips or falls.
- In accordance with Road Running and Cross Country Commission recommendation for their events, non-gun starts were adopted at this event, using the TESS (The Electronic Start System) which incorporates the following features:
 - A flash which should be clearly visible to timekeepers
 - An audible start signals from the sounder units for the athletes
 - A “beep” recall signal from the sounder units to be used in the event of a false start
 - Additional Sounder Units which can be placed at a distance from the start to facilitate the starters verbal commands and signal being heard remotely.
- With the chip timing van location adjacent to the finish and some distance from the start, in order to provide the chip timing team with an audible warning of race start it was intended to utilise the additional Sounder Units close to the chip timing van. However, this did not prove possible. It was therefore agreed that the Referee would observe the starts with the Assistant Referee remaining with the Chip Timing team to provide warning of imminent race starts and allow them to activate their timing on the visual “flash” start signal.
- 5min, 3min and 1min warnings were given, which allowed the Assistant Referee to provide a 1min warning to the chip timing team. Starts were signalled by a flash and audible horn.
- Manual back-up timing was provided and with the following starting issues, this proved essential:
 - Two incidents of the audible and flash signals going off at the Starters “On your marks” command, in both cases the runners reacted to the signal. The Referee allowed both races to proceed without a recall, agreed manual back-up timing and checked with chip timing, which was found to have started late, and agreed appropriate chip-timed adjustment.
 - One incident of audible signal failure. In this case the runners did not react but the chip timing team started on the flash. The Starter immediately reacted by re-signalling the race start but unfortunately did not re-check with the timekeepers before doing so. However, one manual watch did catch the signal. The Referee therefore allowed the race to proceed and agreed chip timing adjustment on the manual back-up watch.
- Given the uncertainty experienced with earlier TESS starts it was decided to change over to the recently developed “OG XC Start System” for the senior races. This seemed more reliable and provided a flash in addition to longer audible start signal.
- The Seniors Mens' race was started before the 1 minute warning had been given, but again the manual back-up timekeepers caught the start signal and the Referee agreed chip timing adjustment on the manual back-up.
- Although the above issues required some technical adjustment of chip timing, all race starts appeared clean with no observed trips or falls.

8. Course and Marshalling:

- Following recent wet weather a final course inspection was held on Thursday 24th February attended by representatives of the Falkirk Community Trust and Parks Department, SAL Events Team, RR&CCC Convener, Event Convener and Clerk of Course to review ground conditions, areas of standing water and any required course diversions. Approval was subsequently given to the event proceeding.

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- On the day, ground conditions had improved considerably with only an area of standing water and soft ground in front of Callendar House giving cause for concern. Despite this area being cordoned off, officials had to frequently remind athletes and spectators to keep off.
- Target distances for the National XC Championships are given on the RR&CCC website. These are the same for both male and female, namely Seniors - 10k, U20's - 7.5k, U17's - 6k, U15's - 4.5k and U13's - 3.2k. Set courses were generally close to these distances although the U20's at 6.8k fell short.
- Falkirk Victoria Harriers have a wealth of experience in setting courses for this event and again provided excellently marked and challenging courses for all ages, worthy of a National Championship.
- The Referee and Assistant Referee met with the Clerk of Course to inspect "the ditch" at point E and subsequently accepted this section of the course. Outer course taping around point C bend was extended in order to eliminate potential confusion. The Referee and Assistant Referee subsequently walked the full course.
- Marshalls allocation was split into early & late shifts, in the locations shown below.



Course Map and Marshalling

- Key Marshalls and personnel were provided with Radios and instruction on their use.
- Marshalls feedback is provided in Appendix A to this report.
- Subsequent rolling and re-seeding ground repairs were required to sections between points F and G but no major concerns from Falkirk Community Trust.

9. The Finish:

- The finish area was enclosed by barriers with exit to the south-east, double chip timing mats with finish line clearly marked along the front edge of the first mat and video camera. The Chip Timing van was located within the finish area to the east of the finish.
- Manual back-up timing and place recording teams were allocated positions to the east side of the finish. However, it was subsequently noted that place recorders frequently obscured the finish line from the video and might therefore have been better allocated a space to the west side of the finish.
- The finish area was manned by a team of officials who aided finishers and encouraged them to keep moving through the finish. At one point they did an excellent job of forming a human shield around a collapsed runner receiving First Aid assistance.

9. Results:

- FR Systems provided chip timing and finish video back-up.
- Manual back-up times and positions were passed to the Chip Timing team for cross-checking before releasing results. Team positions were agreed with the Referee.

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- Provisional results were subsequently posted on both FR Systems and **scottishathletics** website.
- Prior to the Senior Mens race the following was reported to the Referee:
 - One runner, who was in the process of changing clubs but the transfer had not yet been authorised, entered under his “old” club but wanted to run for his “new” club.
 - The runner had been advised from the office that he could run as an individual for his “new” club but would not count in the team.
 - The athlete only had his “old” club vest.
 - The Referee ruled that the athlete should represent his “old” club.
- Following publication of the Provisional results there were a number of athletes reporting that they did not appear in the results. These runners were subsequently identified on the FR Systems video and slotted in to the final results.
- One club reported that one of their members had been given and run with the wrong number. However, following scrutiny it was identified that the athlete in question had not been entered in the Championship by their club and was therefore subsequently disqualified and removed from the results. A message confirming the decision and reasons for disqualification was subsequently sent to the club.

10. Prizegiving:

- Individual and team medal presentations were made following all races.

11. Entries and Finishers:

Age Group	Entries	Finishers	Age Group	Entries	Finishers
• U13G	184	140	• U17M	112	74
• U13B	147	124	• U20W	44	24
• U15G	151	113	• U20M	89	58
• U15B	182	139	• SW	382	268
• U17W	88	59	• SM	892	627

12. Referees' Comments:

- Callendar Park has been the venue of our National Cross Country Championships since 2006. This year's event again proved to be a great success, which is testament to the experience and attention to detail of the Convener and host club Falkirk Victoria Harriers.
- The Referees' thanks to all involved; Falkirk Community Trust, for allowing the use of their facilities and cooperation in enabling staging of the event; host club Falkirk Victoria Harriers and all Officials, Marshals and Volunteers for their cooperation, support and enthusiasm, it wouldn't have been possible without any of you.

David R Cairns

Referee (UKA Level 4 Endurance; License No. 2659560)

FINAL - 10/04/2022

ADDENDUM (15/04/2022):

Subsequent to circulation of final report on 10/04/2022 a further query was raised regarding an athlete who did not run in the U15B Championship. The Events manager checked with the Club in question who confirmed a mistake in chip allocation. This mistake did not impact on medal allocations, the referee therefore agreed to the results being adjusted to reflect the change.

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APPENDIX 1
FEEDBACK FROM COURSE MARSHALS

Position 1 (Late): Everything went ok at my marshal area (station 1). No issues to report. I'll be happy to be on the roster again next year.

Position 2 (Early): Very smooth event. Only other feedback is that the FVH people were all over position 2 and it basically meant I had nothing to do! Not a complaint as these guys knew what they were doing, but I wasn't needed as it worked out.

Position 3b (Early): It was my pleasure!

Position 3b (Late): All brilliantly organised. The lady coordinating the helpers was lovely. Was a pleasure to be involved. It's a great showcase for the best of Athletics

Position 8 (Early): Had a great day helping, bonus I wasn't miles away, Nice to meet you in person, happy to help when I can.

Position 8 (Late): I enjoyed the day and being able to help out. It was good that the weather was helpful and the park looked stunning. It is a good course!!

In the main the public were patient when the tape barrier was used to halt people on the path. A few individuals tried to get across anyway but it did not impede. There was a guy with a dog who crossed in front of two runners about 20 metres up from us towards the golf course, and I would say he was trying to avoid the marshals, but it was alright. A wee boy of 3 also ran out in front of a runner, but that was mum's fault, and, fortunately, he was not mown down!

Overall, it was well organised and a very good event, and a good buzz and family atmosphere, with everyone supporting all the runners regardless of club.

Position 11 (Early): All went well where I was - thanks for the free coffee and roll!

Position 11 (Late): It was my pleasure! It was great to have the event back! I really enjoyed using the bell:) Many Thanks to yourself and the rest of the organising team.

Position 13 (Early): I enjoyed my morning out on the course and it's always good to see the girls I help coach getting stuck into a race. I couldn't fault the organisation and all went smoothly from what I could see too. Well done all.

Position 17 (Late): I thought yesterday's event went very well. I liked the innovations of each marshal spot having a foil blanket and the cow bells went down very well. Well done on organising a great event. It felt good to be back!