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

#### **KENT YOUNG ATHLETES CROSS COUNTRY LEAGUE, DANSON PARK**

Bexley AC provided a testing course in picturesque Danson Park for the Kent Young Athletes cross country league final on Saturday, writes Alan Newman.

There was a healthy entry of 240 athletes competing across the eight race programme and some close finishes helped to warm the spectators' hands on a chilly but sunny day.

Tonbridge AC may have taken their foot off the gas a little but easily secured all the overall male team awards. On the day there were only two team wins for Tonbridge plus one each for Cambridge Harriers, Beech Grove Academy, Dartford Harriers, Blackheath and Bromley Harriers and Invicta East Kent.

Noah and Alfie Armitage-Hookes (Cambridge Harriers) led the under-13s ahead of Jake Potter (Blackheath and Bromley Harriers) and 2012 league champion Charlie Crick (Tonbridge). Cambridge Harriers won from B&B and Tonbridge but the order was reversed in the overall team positions. Medway and Maidstone were fourth at Bexley and in the league overall.

Chris Cohen finally overcame his Tonbridge team mate Alasdair Kinloch but Kinloch is the under-15 champion after two earlier wins. Dartford Harriers' Lewis Calels and Callum Ward were next in line. Tonbridge finished ahead of Blackheath and Dartford both on the day and overall. Medway and Maidstone matched their fourth places achieved in the younger age group.

Jack Goss (Invicta) showed improved form to defeat Tonbridge under-17s, Sean Molloy and new league champion James West. Tonbridge took the team race from Invicta and Bexley in this race and overall.

James Thompson (Tonbridge) won the under-20 race by 37 seconds from individual champion Florian Groothoff (Beech Grove Academy) and Neil Daughters (Ashford). Beech Grove Academy won the team trophy after a tie on points with Tonbridge was resolved through their greater participation.

The plucky Holly Page (Dartford Harriers) maintained her 100% record in the league with a fourth consecutive win in the under-13 girls' race. It was close, though, as Kathleen Faes of Tonbridge was only two seconds behind. Naomi Kingston (Blackheath) was third to duplicate the overall top three places. Dartford won the team race from league winners Blackheath and Invicta.

Sabrinha Sinha (Cambridge Harriers) repeated her previous race victory in the under-15s from Georgina Taylor and league champion Jessica Keene of Blackheath. The black vests of Blackheath won here from Cambridge Harriers and Invicta and also overall from Invicta and Medway and Maidstone.

Bobby Clay (Invicta) enjoyed the biggest win with 81 seconds to spare over the individual trophy winner, Sian Driscoll (Tonbridge) in the under-17s race. Kate Curran (B&B) was third in the same time as the runner-up. Invicta won the team race and the league overall from Tonbridge and Blackheath. Krystal Galley (B&B) won the under-20s from Rebecca Wilby (Dartford) and the overall champion, Cassia Soards (Cambridge Harriers). There were no complete teams finishing at Bexley or in the league overall.

#### Final League Positions

U13 Boys: 1 Charlie Crick (Ton), 2 Jake Potter (B&B), 3 Oliver Plunkett (Ton). Teams: 1 Tonbridge AC, 2 Blackheath and Bromley Harriers, 3 Cambridge Harriers. U15 Boys: 1 Alasdair Kinloch (Ton), 2 Chris Cohen (Ton), 3 Callum Ward (Dart H). Teams: 1 Tonbridge AC, 2 Blackheath and Bromley Harriers, 3 Cambridge Harriers. U17 Men: 1 James West (Ton), 2 Nicholas Armstrong (Bex), 3 Philip Huleatt (BGA). Teams: 1 Tonbridge AC, 2 Bexley AC, 3 Invicta East Kent. U20 Men: 1 Florian Groothoff (BGA), 2 Andrew Robertson (Ashf AC), 3 Seth Zimmerman (BGA). Teams: 1 Beech Grove Academy, 2 Tonbridge AC, 3 Bexley AC. U13 Girls: 1 Holly Page (DH), 2 Kathleen Faes (Ton), 3 Naomi Kingston (B&B). Teams: 1 Blackheath and Bromley Harriers, 2 Tonbridge AC, 3 Dartford Harriers. U15 Girls: 1 Jessica Keene (B&B), 2 Shannon Risky (B&B), 3 Charlotte Harwood (M&M). Teams: 1 Blackheath and Bromley Harriers, 2 Invicta East Kent, 3 Medway and Maidstone AC. U17 Women: 1 Sian Driscoll (Ton), 2 Ellen Newark (Bex), 3 Anna Myers (B&B). Teams: 1 Invicta East Kent AC, 2 Tonbridge AC, 3 Blackheath and Bromley Harriers. U20 Women: 1 Kassia Soards (CH), 2 Megan Williams (CH), 3 Rebecca Wilby (DH). Teams: No teams completed. Male Club Overall: Tonbridge AC. Female Club Overall: Blackheath and Bromley Harriers. Most Improved Club Overall: Dartford Harriers.

## **KENT MEN'S CROSS COUNTRY LEAGUE, DANSON PARK**

Mike Coleman (Medway and Maidstone) won the latest Kent Men's League race at Danson Park to show he is rounding into top form at just the right time to challenge for a seventh Kent senior title next month, writes Alan Newman.

The early lead was taken by the defending league champion Dean Lacy (Cambridge Harriers), who had ended Coleman's run of six consecutive Kent gold medals at Detling just under three years ago.

Coleman closed the gap and as the leading pair looked to be breaking clear of the 175 starters they were joined by Tom Cox (Tonbridge AC), who was celebrating his first England under-20 vest by running with the senior men.

Coleman went ahead after two of the four laps had been completed and his pace took him 30 seconds clear at the finish. Cox and Lacy disputed second with the Tonbridge teenager prevailing for his best ever cross country result.

Lacy had pressure from the fast closing League leader Adam Gilbert (M&M), who was narrowly ahead at the final turn but lost in a full blooded sprint finish.

The dependable Tom Collins was fifth from M&M team mates Ben and Jack Tyler. Peter Tucker led the Blackheath and Bromley Harriers contingent and Dan Bradley and Julian Rendall completed the top ten for Tonbridge.

Paul Hasler (Paddock Wood, 25th) was first M40 master and retained his lead in the overall age group classification. Robert Whittaker (Invicta, 43rd) was the leading M50 master.

M&M secured the team race from Tonbridge and Blackheath and Bromley Harriers to reflect the current positions overall at four to score. Tonbridge took the Duodec 12-to-score race from B&B and Dartford Harriers and now look unbeatable with the final race at Parkwood School, Swanley on February 9.

Current Leading Individuals: 1 Adam Gilbert (M&M) 12 points, 2 Tom Collins (M&M) 17, 3 Alex Gibbins (B&B) 29, 4 Mark Wilkins (M&M) 35, 5 Nick Wood (Dartford Harriers) 43, 6 Paul Hasler (M40, Paddock Wood) 51.

**Alan Newman**