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**Alan Newman's athletics reports appear in the Kent Messenger each Friday**

### **KENT MEN'S CROSS COUNTRY LEAGUE, SOMERHILL SCHOOL**

The autumn sunshine continued for the second race in the Kent men's cross country league held in the manicured grounds of The Schools at Somerhill, Tonbridge on Saturday, writes Alan Newman.

The battle between Dean Lacy of Cambridge Harriers and Mike Coleman of Medway and Maidstone helped to warm the spectators and it was Lacy, the 2010 Kent champion, who prevailed by 36 seconds on this hilly course.

Jason Prickett (under-20) of Invicta East Kent finished third to reprise the rostrum order from the first race at Swanley in a large field of 191 runners.

The top six finishers were completed by Sam Coombes of Dartford Harriers, Ben Cole of hosts Tonbridge AC and Tom Collins of Medway and Maidstone.

Julian Rendall (7th), Greg Cole (11th) and Karim Habibi (16th) ensured a popular home victory for Tonbridge AC by one point from Invicta East Kent, who had Keiran Reilly (10th), Mark Wilkins (13th) and Chris Holmes (14th) to thank for their improved showing.

Medway and Maidstone were third with James Hogg (18th) and M40 Richard Tomlinson (30th) stepping up to score after Adrian Lowther and Barry Royden were both forced to retire from the contest.

In the Duodec 12-to-score competition, Tonbridge AC maintained their inexorable progress towards the title ahead of Blackheath and Bromley Harriers and Tunbridge Wells Harriers.

Leading masters were the M40 Richard Tomlinson of Medway and Maidstone, M50 Garon Heslop (31st) of Ashford AC and M60 Paul Ross-Davies (91st) of Blackheath and Bromley Harriers. The M70 men ran with the women over the shorter 5k distance and the winner was Eric Schofield of Tunbridge Wells.

The remaining Kent men's league fixtures are at Sparrows Den, West Wickham on December 3 and Parkwood School, Swanley on February 11.

### **KENT WOMEN'S CROSS COUNTRY LEAGUE, SOMERHILL SCHOOL**

Deirdre McDermott of Tonbridge AC took a giant step towards defending the Kent Women's League Cliff Temple Memorial individual trophy by sweeping to victory in the second league race at Tonbridge on Saturday.

McDermott was put under early pressure by under-20 junior athlete, Emily Hosker-Thornhill of Invicta East Kent, but Paddock Wood's impressive W40 master, Tina Oldershaw finished strongly for second place. The margin of victory was 43 seconds and Oldershaw was a further 26 seconds clear of Hosker-Thornhill at the finish.

Helena Penfold of Medway and Maidstone and W35's Alice Heather-Hayes of Tunbridge Wells Harriers and Annabelle Stearns of Gravesend Road Runners ensured six different club vests featured at the front of the race.

Tonbridge made home advantage count to take the team race, with Catherine Symons (15th) and Helen Wilson (16th) supporting the winner. Blackheath and Bromley Harriers and Medway and Maidstone were the next teams.

With three master athletes finishing in the top six, the older category winners were W45 Pippa Blackstone (35th) of Tonbridge AC and W55 Sue James (47th) of Paddock Wood AC.

The remaining Kent women's league races are at Danson Park, Bexleyheath on November 12 and Parkwood School, Swanley on February 11.

### **KENT YOUNG ATHLETES CROSS COUNTRY LEAGUE, TONBRIDGE**

Tonbridge AC provided all the available male team and individual winners in the young athletes cross country league to further enhance their reputation as the top club in Kent and one of the best in Britain.

It was a different story in the female races, with three clubs fielding winning teams and individuals from four different clubs winning each race.

Tom Kendrick maintained his 100% record in the under-13 boys' race with Alasdair Kinloch of Thanet Road Runners and Scott Rowatt of Medway and Maidstone repeating their first race podium places. Medway and Maidstone and Blackheath and Bromley Harriers chased Tonbridge in the team race.

George Duggan took the under-15 race from Jack Goss of Ashford AC and Euan Nicholls of Tonbridge AC. Ashford AC and Bexley AC were the next teams to finish behind Tonbridge.

Max Nicholls improved from third in the opening race to win the under-17 event from Tonbridge team mates Dominic Brown and Corey De'ath. Bexley AC and Beech Grove Academy were the team runners-up.

Kent champion, Tom Cox returned to win the under-20 men's race by a whopping two and a half minutes from Warren Uden of Ashford and Alistair Noel of Invicta East Kent, who would have won the team race with one more athlete competing.

The under-13 girls' race saw a second successive victory for Sabrina Sinah-Coe of Cambridge Harriers from Naomi Kineston and Jessica Keen of team

winner, Blackheath and Bromley Harriers. Tonbridge AC and Medway and Maidstone followed in the team event.

Bobby Clay of Invicta East Kent was a minute clear of Natasha Sinha-Coe of Cambridge Harriers and Leah Melvin of Tonbridge AC in the under-15 girls' race. Invicta took the team race from Tonbridge and Blackheath and Bromley. Sophie Foreman and league champion, Nicole Taylor led the under-17s race for team winners Tonbridge AC, with Ellie Hume of Invicta East Kent third. Blackheath and Bromley Harriers and Ashford were the nearest opposition.

The remaining Kent young athletes' league races are at Danson Park, Bexleyheath on November 12 and Sparrows Den, West Wickham on December 3.

**Alan Newman**