

VAC AGM: 18 SEPTEMBER 2017

2016-2017 Cross Country Report by VAC Entries Secretary

Summary

VAC continued to provide opportunities for members to compete in cross country matches. We staged our annual cross country championship for members and encouraged participation from other Masters' athletes. A VAC men's team held its own in Division Four of the Surrey Cross Country League, finishing a creditable 6th. We hosted, and won, the inaugural BMAF Inter-Area Masters Club Challenge on VAC's regular Wimbledon Common course. There were VAC teams in the East Surrey League and the Vets Inter-Club race at Loughton. Fourteen VAC members represented England and Scotland at the British & Irish Masters International match. Many other members competed in BMAF, European and World Masters cross country events.

More detail

1. VAC Cross Country Championships, Wimbledon Common: 21 January 2017

It was pleasing that the number of competitors increased again. There were 56 finishers (40 men and 16 women) compared with 47 (34 men, 13 women) in 2016 and 48 (32 men, 16 women) in 2015. The quality was high and four men's course records were bettered, and three women's. The race had a UKA Permit and operated under UKA rules, which drives up standards. Compliance ensured that a Risk Assessment was in place, backed up with suitable medical support, good signage and well briefed marshals. Preparation and planning is underway for next year's event on 20 January 2018.

2. Men's Surrey League Cross Country 2016-17

VAC fielded a men's team in the four fixtures of Division Four in the Surrey CC League. Thanks go to Paddy Clark who continued as the Team Manager, assisted by Maggie Statham. Ten men were required for a full scoring team. This was achieved in two of the four matches, but we were one man short in the 2nd match and two men short in the 4th. This did not detract from the great team spirit. Numbers were down because of injuries to some of VAC's regulars. The VAC team finished 6th out of ten in the Division.

Promotion of the VAC team will continue through the website, newsletter and email. Indications are that new men are planning to run for VAC in 2017-18 and some of the regulars will return.

3. BMAF Inter-Area Cross Country 2016, Wimbledon Common

VAC took the lead in devising and establishing an annual cross country challenge match for BMAF area-clubs. The inaugural event was held in October 2016 on Wimbledon Common and can be considered a success, although the numbers were lower than hoped for (55 finishers including 29 from VAC). The "Bob Belmore Trophy", in memory of VAC's long serving, hardworking Cross Country Secretary, was won by VAC. The event will be repeated in 2017, hosted by SWVAC, with a different scoring format, using age grading. VAC members will be encouraged to enter and form men's and women's VAC teams.

4. VAC members in Masters, national and international championships

Fourteen VAC members were selected to represent their country at the British & Irish Masters International Cross Country in Glasgow in November 2016. Julian Critchlow (M55) and Clare Elms (W50) won individual gold medals with Ben Reynolds taking the M50 silver medal. Twenty VAC members made the trip to the BMAF CC Championships in Liverpool in March 2017. Pauline Rich won the W70 individual Gold medal and the VAC trio of Ben Reynolds, Simon Baines and Andy Weir won the M45 team Gold medal for Thames Hare & Hounds. Other commendations go to Anna Garnier (W60 Silver), Lesley Bowcott (W70 Silver), Ann Bath (W65 Bronze), Ben Reynolds (M50 Bronze) and Simon Baines (M45 Bronze).

Maggie Statham

VAC Entries Secretary: 17 September 2017