

Geelong Region Cross Country



Report: XCR09 Rd 10 - Tan Relays (Sat Sep 19)

The final round of the XCR09 series was held at Melbourne's famous tan track and as always, posed the challenge of not only Anderson St hill, but dodging the hundreds of regular walkers, joggers, prams, dogs & children who come out when there are blue skies & mild temperatures. The Geelong Region team had a modest representation with an open men's & women's team, an over 40 men's team & an U18 men's team. In terms of overall season results, the main interest was whether our Div 1 men could finish 2 positions ahead of Essendon and claw back into 3rd position having fallen into 4th with a DNF at the Burnley Half.

With most of the field starting at 9am, it was an impressive stampede that headed towards the bottom of Anderson St. In the Div 1 Men, Brenton Rowe led off & had a terrific battle with Box Hill's Chris Hamer to lead by about 5 metres into the first change with a very impressive 11.12. Nick Wightman followed and similarly had a great battle with both Box Hill & Glenhuntly to hand over to Scott Rantall in 2nd place with a great run of 11.35. Scott (11.53) & Brett Coleman (11.58) ran solidly, but certainly didn't threaten the PB archives, to have us in 3rd position after leg 4. Colin Thornton, the self proclaimed "Tan Specialist!", missed the relay change by a few seconds courtesy of a bout of gastro (onset 1 hr prior but 6 hrs prior for his daughter!) & headed off in great trepidation of what was ahead. To his credit, he got around, albeit in a time that he would usually equate with a warm up! By this time we were in 5th and Essendon had a handy lead on us. Ryan Christian (12.06) anchored the team and maintained our position to finish 5th on the day & thus 4th for the season. Sadly the Burnley result did cost us another top 3 finish this season but for now, we move on & look towards 2010.

The women's Div 1 team that has struggled for numbers all season, again struggled to get to the start line at the Tan. Thankfully juniors Jmara Hockley & Wendy Parish put their hands up to fill the women's team. Jmara led off & ran very well to hand over in 14.58 to Wendy Parish who also ran well with a 17.02. Eliesha Byrt was next up but didn't such an enjoyable day, finishing in in 20.02 that didn't quite match her 18.40 of the year prior. Cathryn Hoare brought the team home in a very solid time of 16.18.

It was pleasing to have an O40 men's team though in part not pleasing that this came about because we didn't have enough runners for a 2nd open men's team! Andrew Bell led off, having done some swat training on the track midweek, to run an impressive 13.32. Graeme Watkins & Phil Christian,

both coming back from injury, followed Andrew and after tentatively ascending Anderson St, both motored home to finish in 14.10 & 15.15 respectively.

Our only junior team was that of the U18 men. Jackson Hamill-Beach got the team off to a great start with a well run 13.21. Following were Jesse Shields in 15.22 & Sameul Shields in 17.05 to bring the team home in 7th place.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & AWARDS

A special thanks to our officials Chris Sly, Leslie Elms & Sharon Hockley. Thanks also to Chris Sly for organising the team bus.



The Steigen Team Player Award for this round goes to **Phil Christian** for putting his hand up to complete the O40 team at last minute. When called, Phil said he thought he'd be ok and headed out late Friday evening for a jog just to make sure his ITB was under control. Thanks Phil for helping out the team & we're sure you'll look great in your Steigen gear!



The Barking Dog Award goes to **Sharon & Jmara Hockley** for helping out with the day's officiating (thanks Sharon) & for helping to fill the women's open team (thanks Jmara). We hope you enjoy the hospitality of the Barking Dog.



Closest Time Predictions (each win Subway Vouchers)

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|-----------------|----------------|
| 1 st | Jmara Hockley |
| 2 nd | Cathryn Hoare |
| 3 rd | Samuel Shields |