

Stair-rods in Wellesley Woods – 10 November 2018

Ian Kennedy reports from the Hampshire League



Emily Shaw on her way to a fine win at Aldershot

The course at Wellesley Woods was used for the first time last season. It received the 'thumbs up' back then from those Wimborne athletes who competed. Setting off from Dorset this time around it was a glorious morning, with the weak sunlight showing off the autumn colours of the trees to

great effect. On arrival, conditions seemed almost perfect, there was very little wind. We were under no illusions however, from mid-day we'd seen cloud symbols everywhere on the apps on our phones.

We don't usually have too many under-11s travel to the far-flung Hampshire League meetings, so it was great to see three girls and one boy taking part. Imogen Rawles was the best-placed of our girls, heading her team mate Evie Fuller. It was a gutsy performance from Evie as she tweaked an ankle, but her resilience got her to the finish line in what was, under the circumstances, a very decent time. Ella Fazakerley completed our team.

U11 girls (49 finishers)

19 – Imogen Rawles – 7:29

25 – Evie Fuller – 7:35

40 – Ella Fazakerley – 8:27

Harry Butcher had a cracking race in the under-11s, finishing in the top 10.

U11 boys (59 finishers)

9 – Harry Butcher – 6:31

Three lined up for us on the start line of the under-13 boys' race. Josh Fazakerley and George Butcher ran much of the race in close proximity, before Josh broke away in the latter stages. It was great to see George back in action as he's had a spell 'under the weather'. Also on the start line was Archie Cunningham. Archie got into difficulties and was unable to finish.

U13 boys (89 finishers)

42 – Josh Fazakerley – 12:47

52 – George Butcher – 13:07

The biggest Wimborne AC performance of the day came from Emily Shaw in the under-15 girls' race. Emily ran a smart race and got away a little more steadily than of late. By the time the leaders headed into the woods for the first time, Emily had worked her way up to around fifth position. It wasn't long before the front three – Emily, Pippa Roessier (Aldershot) and Isabelle Hinckley (Southampton) – broke away from the rest of the field. By the end they were more than 40 seconds ahead of the next runner. In the previous meeting between these athletes, Emily lost time in the latter stages to Isabelle and Pippa. This time around it was Emily who had the strongest finish, and claimed the win in a hard won contest.

U15 girls (65 finishers)

1 – Emily Shaw – 16:22

Ollie Rawles, as his sister had done, led the Wimborne team home in his age-group. He caught Tom Fuller in the latter stages who, just as his sister had done, had gone over on his ankle. Tom gave no thought to giving up, but it was clear that he was struggling badly with his injury, and he did well to finish.

U15 boys (67 finishers)

33 – Ollie Rawles – 16:58

37 – Tom Fuller – 17:08

The under-17 women's race caught some of the downpour. The super-focused Holly Nixon wasn't the least bit distracted, she kept her mind on the job and recorded yet another strong top 10 finish in the Hampshire League. The Kingswell-Farr girls were also on the start line. For both of them it was their first

U17 women (36 finishers)

Hampshire League fixture of the season and we were delighted to have them back. Beth ran a good solid race for 28th, but poor Izzie was our third runner to be caught out by the uneven footing in the woods and turn an ankle. Izzie was unable to finish.

Charlie Davies and Ben Martin competed in the under-17 men's race for us. Charlie looked particularly strong in the latter stages. These guys showed tremendous commitment, in what were by then very difficult conditions underfoot.

8 – Holly Nixon – 17:40
28 – Bethanie Kingswell-Farr – 19:43

U17 men (38 finishers)

24 – Charlie Davies – 24:30
29 – Ben Martin – 25:15

It was great to have a complete senior men's team. Kerry and Pete Kingswell-Farr had been in action a week earlier for us in the Wessex League. As at Yeovil, Kerry was our first man over the line. Second Wimborne in was Rob Rawles. Rob was congratulating himself on his choice of footwear. He forsook the spikes and went for a feisty pair of trail shoes which he felt gave him better grip in these difficult conditions. With so little rain for months, the ground was hard so the water was sitting on the surface. There was a good deal of splashing as the runners went past! Completing our line-up, and along with Pete, an ever-present in our Hampshire League team this year was Andy Olden.

Senior men (314 finishers)

238 – Kerry Mapp – 45:25
245 – Rob Rawles – 45:52
246 – Pete Kingswell-Farr – 45:58
288 – Andy Olden – 50:26