# WACers rise to challenge at Yeovil – 4 November 2018

*Ian Kennedy reports from the Wessex League*

**Imogen Rawles and Evie Fuller, following in their brothers' footsteps**

The northern outpost for the Wessex League in recent seasons has been Yeovil Country Park. It's always well supported by clubs in the north of the county and from Somerset, but encouraging numbers from Hampshire and east Dorset were also in attendance. The fixture brought the season's first sighting of some much needed rainfall. This, combined with little wind and mild temperatures, made it great conditions to race in.

As they have in the first two Wessex races, Imogen Rawles and Evie Fuller led the under-11 girls' team home. Imogen's ascent of the zigzag was the deciding factor in determining who would be the first red home. Lavender West made her debut in Race 2, she is still only 8 years-old, and she put in a hugely encouraging performance on the league's toughest course. Georgia Slade produced another steady and reliable races to complete our entries.

*U11 girls (30 finishers)*

*11 – Imogen Rawles – 8:58*
*12 – Evie Fuller – 8:59*
*20 – Lavender West – 9:39*
*26 – Georgia Slade – 10:34*

We've been looking forward to welcoming Woody Van der Feltz to cross-country after an impressive track season. In his first XC race of the season he led the under-11 boys' team home. Josh Fricker and Toby Butt renewed their duel at Yeovil. They are both Wessex League ever-presents and over three races so far they have been separated by a total of just four seconds! Bearing in mind the distances they are covering and the terrain, this is quite extraordinary. Ollie Green made his first appearance of the season and was immediately in the thick of it, completing a group of three red vests coming in one behind the other. This was a strong team performance.

*U11 boys (26 finishers)*

*5 – Woody Van der Feltz – 7:42*
*9 – Josh Fricker – 7:52*
*10 – Toby Butt – 7:54*
*11 – Ollie Green – 7:59*

The under-13 girls' race brought Iris Courtney's best race of the season so far, for second place. The mature performance from Isabella Cox, to be next red in, underlines how much progress she's made over recent seasons. In hot pursuit of Isabella was her great friend Kate Simmonds. Their close proximity ensured that there was no let up in effort until crossing the finish line. Ruby Sargeant found herself in a Chaffey sandwich! Amelia Chaffey was the first of this trio home, with Grace Chaffey pursuing Ruby to the end.

*U13 girls (31 finishers)*

*2 – Iris Courtney – 11:25*
*15 – Isabella Cox – 13:02*
*17 – Kate Simmonds – 13:14*
*23 – Amelia Chaffey – 13:41*
*26 – Ruby Sargeant – 14:06*
*28 – Grace Chaffey – 14:15*

We're having difficulty managing to field two Williams brothers in the same Wessex race! Jack Williams led the line for the reds, but he had to work hard for the right to be first WAC home as the dogged and determined Jago Smith was very much on his case in the under-13 boys' race. Archie Cunningham secured the final point-scoring position with a solid performance. Luke Mogridge can take great heart on his WAC XC debut, coming as it did at the league's toughest course, and with Archie in his sights. The hard working Jack Doran completed our team.

*U13 boys (22 finishers)*

*4 – Jack Williams – 11:37*
*6 – Jago Smith – 11:43*
*15 – Archie Cunningham – 12:44*
*16 – Luke Mogridge – 12:57*

*20 – Jack Doran – 14:48*

We've got some talented under-15 girls at the club, but so far in the Wessex League we haven't managed to field a complete team. It was a dominant performance from Emily Shaw to take the win by a significant margin from the rest of the field. Support for Emily came in the guise of Sarah Graham who finished mid-field.

*U15 girls (23 finishers)*

*1 – Emily Shaw – 15:24*
*11 – Sarah Graham – 18:07*

Our first four under-15 boys team here was identical to the team that competed in Race 2. The finishing order was a repeat of what happened at Lytchett too – Tom Fuller, Joel Green, Ollie Rawles and Jay Dunn. What is interesting is watching the time gaps. These team-mates seem to be inspiring each other to draw out improving performances. We were pleased to see added to this foursome Joe Healey, he was making his first Wessex League performance of the season.

*U15 boys (14 finishers)*

*5 – Tom Fuller – 14:53*
*8 – Joel Green – 15:30*
*9 – Ollie Rawles – 15:35*
*11 – Jay Dunn – 17:13*
*13 – Joe Healey – 18:25*

Our under-17 women won the team competition at Yeovil. A characteristically gutsy race from Holly Nixon saw her first home for us. Maddy Herbert left it all out there too … she secured the important points for the team score. It was great to get four under-17 women on the start line, and Izzie Kingswell-Farr and Emma Graham both did good solid work in this demanding environment.

*U17 women (9 finishers)*

*3 – Holly Nixon – 20:09*
*4 – Maddy Herbert – 20:50*
*7 – Isabelle Kingswell-Farr – 24:03*
*8 – Emma Graham – 27:46*

We only need two to score in the under-17 category … and it was just as well! Ben Martin and Jack Moss-Willcox saw their finishing positions reversed from the last race. Once again, healthy rivalry between team-mates sees our runners striving for improved performances.

*U17 men (9 finishers)*

*4 – Ben Martin – 18:13*
*6 – Jack Moss-Willcox – 18:59*

We had two women competing in the combined u20s/women's race. Minty Stubbs was 5th over line, but 2nd under-20. This result sees her placed at the top of the averages in the u20w's averages with just one race to go. Tara Green was well placed in the women's race.

*Senior women (39 finishers)*

*5 – Minty Stubbs – 21:12 (2nd u20)*
*25 – Tara Green – 25:17*

Our men's team comprised the ever-present Pete Kingswell-Farr along with two – Mike Jurd and Kerry Mapp – who have cross-country experience from previous seasons but who were making their first appearances in 2018/2019. All three of our guys were racing on the back of big efforts from the previous weekend. Mike and Kerry had done the challenging 'Stickler' (Dorset's Three Peaks Challenge) and Pete was fresh (if that's the right word) from racing over the Seven Sisters in the Beachy Head Marathon. I'm not sure if they would have found Yeovil comparatively easy, or whether they were still paying the price for the previous week's exertions!

*Senior men (60 finishers)*

*38 – Kerry Mapp – 35:38*
*44 – Pete Kingswell-Farr – 37:05*
*46 – Mike Jurd – 37:23*

There is one final Wessex League race this season – 16 December at Bryanston School. We are the host club, so shortly the appeal will be going out to WACers for volunteers for marshaling duties. The race at Bryanston also incorporates the Dorset County Championships. Here's the link to enter https://poolerunningevents.co.uk/events/dorset-county-athletics-association-cross-country-championships/