

Lardner Park XC Report

Sat May 3, 2008

On Sat May 3, we had a small team drive the 2hrs + to Lardner Park in Warragul for Rd 2 of the XCR 08 season. Some photos from the Aths Vic website are attached. These races also doubled as the Victorian Country Cross Country Championships for 2008. Lardner Park has a reputation for offering true cross country running and it seems that the hills, mud, fence & multiple ditches to be jumped didn't disappoint, especially with heavy rain in the 24 hours prior.

The U'14 girls kicked off the afternoon over 2kms. **Claudia Verstraten** and **Jmara Hockley-Samon** both had fantastic races to finish 2nd & 3rd overall respectively and 1st & 2nd in the country championships.

Clare Hodgson was next to represent Geelong in the U'16 girls 3km race and similarly had a fantastic race, also finishing 2nd overall and & 1st in the country championships.

Our senior men were next to race over 8kms. After securing a win in the opening round, they were very keen to have a good result at Lardner to keep close to the top of the Div 1 ladder. Things looked shaky in the lead up, however, with numbers down and fingers crossed that illness or injury would not hit any of those planning to run in the lead up. Fortunately the only hiccup proved to be Andre LaGerche's navigational skills in finding Lardner Park, but a 2 lap course always lends itself well to warming up during lap 1! **Lee Troop** recorded another impressive run. Despite feeling tired from a heavy training load and spending more time in recent weeks with his altitude tent than Freyja and Macy, he managed to win by 23 secs and in so doing, also recorded Geelong's 3rd Country title for the meet. Next in for Geelong was **Ryan Christian** who continued his recent good form to finish 15th overall and 2nd in the country championship. **Andre LaGerche** who started with cold legs but a high heart rate slowly made his way through the field to be next in for Geelong placing 30th overall, followed soon after by **Michael McNaughton** (33rd), **Colin Thornton** (34th) and **Wes Benson** (59th). Word has it that if you exclude the time it took Andre to get over the one fence per lap, he would have threatened the top 3 placings! Next in for Geelong having his first run for Geelong was **Jack Verstraten** (134th) – welcome and well done. Jack was followed in by **Andrew Chalmers** (235th). Overall Geelong finished 3rd in Div 1 (unofficially at present as AV have not published the team results) which is a great result given that it could easily have been much lower if Andre (or anyone else) was still out there now trying to get over that fence! This places Geelong 2nd overall in Div 1 after Rd 2, 1 pt behind Box Hill and 2 pts ahead of Knox.

The last race of the day was the senior women's over 6kms, that was made up of a 2km then 4km circuit, to ensure that they got to fully enjoy the whole fence / ditches / hills experience! First home for Geelong was **Kristen Wyatt** finishing 20th overall and 3rd in the country championship. Word has it that Kristen spent much of her time towards the front of the field before the elements took their toll late in the race. I cannot confirm whether the fence had any role in her undoing but if so, perhaps Andre and Kristen can team up at training prior to the 2012 running of this race! Kristen was followed across the line by **Cathryn Hoare** (47th), **Freyja Troop** (78th), **Lisa Verstraten** (102nd) and **Eliesha Byrt** (106th). If you truly want to see the fence together with the one competitor neither Andre nor Kristen will be seeking for advice, check out the YouTube footage at <http://www.youtube.com/athsvictv>. Also featured in this footage are all 3 of our newly crowned country champions.

Rd 3 is now only 9 sleeps away. A reminder that those wishing to race **must** have entered via Athletics Victoria by **5pm this Monday**. You are automatically entered if you took out a season ticket.

Before finishing, a final congratulations to Andre La Gerche who backed up last Saturday's run to win the Puffing Billy Great Train Race the following day by over a minute. I'm not sure whether there were any similar navigational difficulties on the way there, but clearly no fence jumping was involved!

Results

Open Men	Time	Place
Lee Troop	24.30	1
Ryan Christian	26.19	15
Andre LaGerche	27.13	30
Michael McNaughton	27.22	33
Colin Thornton	27.23	34
Wes Benson	28.31	59
Jack Verstraten	31.06	134
Andrew Chalmers	34.33	235

Open Women	Time	Place
Kristen Wyatt	23.38	20
Cathryn Hoare	25.54	47
Freyja Troop	27.56	78
Lisa Verstraten	30.01	102
Eliesha Byrt	31.41	106

U'16 Girls 3k	Time	Place
Clare Hodgson	11.50	2

U'14 Girls 2k	Time	Place
Claudia Verstraten	7.23	3
Jmara Hockley-Samon	7.26	4