

Geelong Region Cross Country



Report: XCR09 Rd 2 - Lardner Park Cross Country (May 9)

2008 saw many spills over a true cross country course consisting of rolling hills, large gullies and a fence to jump for those competing in the 4 & 8km events. As a result, The Geelong Region Team made the long trip to Lardner Park, Warragul, with some trepidation!



The day started with the U'14's competing over a 2km course. Claudia Verstraten had a sensational race to finish 2nd overall and she also finished first country athlete to take out the country championship. Jack Verstaten Jnr similarly ran very strongly in the men's section to also secure 1st place in the country championship with Jack Hockley-Samon finishing just behind to claim 3rd.



The next race was over 4kms for the U'18 boys. Jackson Hamill-Beach led Jesse Shields home after a very brief warm up courtesy of the \$1.3 billion Monash Freeway upgrade that we are sure (some day...) will be a worthwhile project!



The 3km cross country fielded the greatest number of our junior athletes. In the U18's, Georgie Buckley finished 7th overall whilst Jmara Hockley-Samon put Geelong back on the dias with a great win in the Victorian Country division in the U16 division. Holly Curtis finished 3rd in the same division with Darcie Verstraten and Ricci Curtis not far back.



Next up was the open men's race over 8kms. We had a very solid team with 9 starters and hopefully 9 finishers! Brenton Rowe led the charge over the gullies & fences, a far removed terrain from his last race in Stawell over the mile where he finished 2nd by 0.1secs and almost broke the 4 minute mile on grass! Following behind were Colin Thornton, Brett Coleman, Ryan Christian, Nick Wightman & Michael McNaughton who were all having a closely fought bragging rights tussle. You'll have to check the results for the finishing order. Following the first 6 were Jack Verstraten, Peter Samon & Leslie Elms. Leslie was running in his first cross country race for Geelong and having had a fitting session with Mary MacDonald the night prior, was pumped to put his new singlet into action! Well done to Brenton who finished 3rd in the Victorian Country Championship. Overall, our Div 1 men finished 3rd behind Box Hill and Glenhuntly. The gap to the Hunters was only 4 points proving again that every place counts!



The last race for the afternoon was the open women's 4km event. Unfortunately we didn't quite manage to get 4 runners to complete the div 1 team, but we did have 3 very enthusiastic starters in Cathryn Hoare, Lisa Verstraten & Eliesha Byrt. Chris Sly positioned himself, camera in hand, at the fence jump to catch all the action. But credit where credit is due, the women all took the fence in their stride (so to speak) and finished well over the tough course.

