

SOUTH OF THE THAMES CROSS COUNTRY ASSOCIATION, REPORT FOR 2011/2012

1. **AGM:** Held at Belgrave Hall on 19 September 2011

2. **Elections / Re-elections:**

President:	Rachel Disley (Thames Hare & Hounds)	
Vice Presidents:	Matthew Hyett (Kingston & Poly)	
	Andrew Walker (Reigate Priory AC)	
Hon. Gen. Sec.	Geoff Newton (Tadworth AC)	
Hon. Treasurer	Don Turner (Epsom & Ewell H)	
Hon. Race Sec.	Don Turner (Epsom & Ewell H)	
Hon. Asst. Sec	Archives & History	Brian Boulton (Cambridge Harriers)
	Trophies	Brian Boulton (Cambridge Harriers)
Hon. Auditors	Sarah Smith (Ranelagh Harriers)	

3. **5 Mile Team Race**

This was held at Nork Park, Banstead on 26 November. Special thanks are due to Tadworth AC, the smallest club in the Association, for stepping in, in the absence of other volunteers. There were 193 finishers.

Men

1.	John Gilbert Kent AC	28.07
2.	Ben Cole Tonbridge AC	28.49
3.	Richard Ward Belgrave H	29.29

Women

1.	Emily Alden Epsom & E	33.09
2.	Steph McCall U20 SLH	34.50
3.	Zoe Shannon DMV	34.52

U20 Men

1	Jamie Bryant Tonbridge AC	30.11
2.	Jack Keywood Tonbridge AC	30.51
3.	George Quinn Kent AC	32.51

Men's Teams (4 Score)

1.	Herne Hill H	28 pts
2.	Tonbridge AC	36 pts
3.	Belgrave H	52 pts

Women's teams (4 score)

1.	South London H	27 pts
2.	Thames Hare & H	38 pts
3.	Dulwich Runners	52 pts

Men's Teams (8 Score)

1.	Herne Hill H	179 pts
2.	Kent AC	192 pts
3.	Belgrave H	358 pts

4. **Championship Race 7 ½ Miles**

This was held at Roehampton on 17 December, hosted by Thames Hare and Hounds. There were 214 finishers and an unusually high number of non finishers.

Men

1.	Phil Wicks Belgrave Harriers	37.42
2.	Dean Lacy Cambridge Harriers	38.13
3.	John Gilbert Kent AC	38.17

Women

1.	Ruth Clifton Thames H & H	46.48
2.	Emily Alden Epsom & Ewell	47.10
3.	Clare Elms Dulwich Runners	47.29

M40	Brian Wilder Herne Hill H	41.07
M50	John Foss South London H	45.55
M60	Mike Mann Dulwich R	51.14

W40	Clare Elms Dulwich R	47.29
W50	Chris Costiff SLH	52.03
W60	Ros Tabor Dulwich R	57.27

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Men 's Teams (6 score)

1. Herne Hill Harriers	69 pts
2. Hercules Wimbledon	131 pts
3. Kent AC	150 pts

Women's Teams (6 Score)

1. South London Harriers	98 pts
2. Dulwich Runners	122 pts
3. Belgrave H	123 pts

Men's Teams (12 Score)

1. Herne Hill Harriers	209 pts
2. Kent AC	549 pts
3. Hercules Wimbledon	647 pts

Comment:

Fixture congestion remains a problem. It will help if member clubs can persuade their Counties and County Leagues hold their fixtures on recommended dates.

It is still a matter of some concern that there is a shortage of clubs volunteering to put on the 5 Mile Team Race, and as a result the burden of staging races is not shared fairly around the total club membership. Hosting the race is not a particularly onerous task, as the Association handles race entries and results, and provides most of the officials on the day. My club, Tadworth AC stepped in last year to save the day but this will not be an option next year due to other commitments. I am inclined to call everyone's bluff in future. If nobody volunteers in a given year we may simply not hold the race, which will be a shame since numbers are typically the same as for the Championship.

Currently excuses given by clubs for not hosting races, centre around the search for suitable land and facilities, and conditions of use imposed by local authorities. However I am convinced that clubs are also deterred by the increasing amount of work that race organisers have to undertake. The day may come when UKA itself may make life intolerable for most volunteer (as opposed to paid) race organisers.

Currently obtaining a UKA permit for cross country races is relatively straightforward compared with road races, but my suspicion is that it may eventually become quite onerous if the bureaucrats get their way. This could make it even more difficult to find clubs to host races. Currently I suspect the majority of cross country races take place without licenced officials in some key positions. Some clubs don't even bother to get a permit at all (no names, no pack drill). However some local authorities require massive 3rd party insurance cover as a condition of land use permission. Currently this is best done through UKA.

If the UKA bureaucracy make it very difficult or impossible to find clubs to put on races, we may as a last resort, need to make alternative arrangements. We could for example arrange our own 3rd party insurance on behalf of member clubs to cover SOTCCA cross country races or indeed other cross country races as well. I can also talk informally to ARC secretary Michael White (who I know personally) to see if they could come up with a suitable scheme for cross country races, should UKA permit become too onerous. They already arrange cover for road races under their own permit system; however this would not currently be suitable for cross country races.

Much of the pressure for this over regulation comes from Sport England, rather than UKA itself. However Sport England will be replaced by another body at the end of 2012. It will be interesting to see if this slows the licensing and accreditation juggernaut. Truly we live in interesting times.

The website is making steady progress and will become more important as the years go by. Our thanks go out to Alan Mead for undertaking this major task.

Geoff Newton
Hon. General Secretary