

Club Championship Round 8: Headington 5 – 27/08/17

By David Dibben

Photos thanks to Barry Cornelius (oxonraces.com), Nicole Rickett and the Bate family.

THE Roadrunners' club championship road show arrived in Headington on Sunday for what I consider to be one of the best-organised events on the circuit.

The five-miler, which was the eighth round of our championship, is the Oxford club's flagship event, and I would recommend it to anyone.

It is a reasonably-priced race which is very well marshalled, with excellent signage, and finishes with a better-than-average goody bag and free T-shirt as well as results immediately available in the clubhouse within a few minutes of runners crossing the line. What's not to like about that?



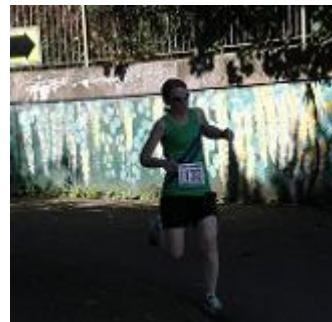
Oh, and the course is as near as makes no difference flat.

Flat enough for our former men's captain Mark Worringham to slaughter the course record last year.

We went mob-handed in an effort to defend his title but sadly an under 23 runner from Luton, Ryan Burling, took Mark's record in an indecently quick time of 25:12. The rest of us found his pace, and the weather, rather too hot.

Nevertheless there were the usual good performances throughout the age categories as the battles for our titles hotted up.

First Roadrunner to finish was Justin Simons in 32:24, earning the bragging rights for Tony Canning's Wednesday evening training group as he had 'team-mates' Alan Freer, Helen Pool and Colin Cottell not far behind him, with Nicole Rickett giving Canning's girls the one-two within the club.



Our second man home was Vet 40 championship leader Eugene McSorley, while Alan Freer virtually sewed up our Vet 60 championship as well as taking the race's age group prize on the day.



Our other prize-winners were Liz Atkinson, who collected a surprise second place in the women's V65 group, and Helen Pool, who completed a clean sweep of age group prizes in this year's three five-mile races.

But while Helen is used to being our leading lady on these occasions she wasn't even the leading Helen this time round.



That honour went to Helen Dixon, who took a massive four minutes and 37 seconds off her pb while finishing in 52:34.

That's a big boost for her Wednesday group coach, Katie Gumbrell, who should have had a prize for the best and noisiest supporter on the course.

Official Roadrunners results: 50th, Justin Simons 32:24; 53rd Eugene McSorley 32:47; 58th Alan Freer 33:11 (1st MV60); 59th Chris Cutting 32:57; 66th Helen Pool 33:24 (2nd WV40); 79th Colin Cottell 33:56; 87th Dave Caswell 34:28; 91st Dean Allaway 34:26; 93rd Stuart Jones 34:37; 120th Dan Rickett 35:32; 123rd Keith Ellis 36:08; 125th David Dibben 36:12; 134th Nicole Rickett 36:26; 187th Andy Atkinson 39:07; 196th Sam Whalley 39:31; 213th Sally Carpenter 40:42; 240th Jim Kiddie 41:44; 275th Tina Woffington 43:41; 292nd Stephen Wing 44:43; 294th Frank Cooper 45:21; 306th Tom Harrison 46:36; 317th Linda Wright 47:20; 358th Maureen Sweeney 50:38; 368th Suzanne Bate 51:49; 369th Liz Atkinson 52:05; 374th Helen Dixon 52:34; 404th Sarah Walters 57:06; 418th Julie Wing 63:09; 420th Jill Dibben 65:57; 421st Stephen Wing 69:06.

These results come with a couple of caveats. The eagle-eyed among you will have spotted that Alan Freer finished ahead of Chris Cutting although he completed the course in a slower time. Likewise, Dean Allaway finished three places behind Dave Caswell although he was two seconds quicker over the distance.

My problem with that is... why go to all the trouble and expense of having chip-timing if you are going to ignore the data which it produces?

My second problem is with pbs. Word on the street after the event was that Helen Dixon's sensational improvement was our only pb of the day but, lo and behold, according to the Run Britain official results there were also pbs for Stuart Jones, Dan and Nicole Rickett, Sam Whalley, Sally Carpenter, Stephen Wing, Frank Cooper and myself... but not Helen Dixon!

Now I do know for a fact that the previous time I competed in this race I finished in a time as near as makes no difference 93 seconds better than Sunday's time, so apologies to those mentioned if they already boast vastly superior pbs to these figures.

And special apologies to Helen Dixon on behalf of Run Britain for their sin of omission!

Hopefully all will be cleared up when the club statistician sorts this lot out and updates the championship positions.