

Northern Athletics XC Relay Championships
Saturday 1 October 2011
Report by Kay Farrow of Beverley AC

After a successful day at the recent road relay competition in Warrington athletes from Beverley Athletic Club travelled to Sheffield last weekend to take part in the Northern Athletics Cross-Country Relay Championships.

Thirty-two teams of four lined up at the start for the senior men's event on the hottest October day since records began. With the temperature around 30°C conditions were very unusual for a cross-country event in October. Instead of slithering around in the mud athletes were faced with very dry rock hard ground on the challenging hilly course.

Beverley fielded a strong A team whose combined time for the two-mile circuit around Graves Park was 47:05. James Pearson was the first to embark on the course. He was also the fastest Beverley runner, completing the course in 11:11. He was followed by Stuart Little and Matt Chadwick in 12.02 and 12:08 respectively. Jonathan Leskiewicz, taking part in his first cross-country relay, ran a strong final leg to finish in 11.44. The team finished in a respectable seventeenth place overall.

Beverley's B team was one runner short but as incomplete teams were allowed to run Neil Bant, Darren Rodmell and Chris Woolner gained valuable experience by taking part. Rodmell and Woolner were also competing in their first cross-country relay. Although he thoroughly enjoyed the event Woolner commented "It was the hardest two miles of my life!"

Sam Allen, Kate Ladell and Rachel Woolner



The course was mainly on grass with two sections through woodland with tricky tree roots to negotiate. The circuit also included a long drag uphill and a short steep climb through the woods. The gentle slope down to the finishing line was a welcome relief and allowed a fast finish for all athletes.

Only three team members were needed for the ladies' competition and eighteen teams took part. They used the same two-mile circuit as the men and Beverley fielded an experienced team. Kate Ladell ran a strong first leg in 15:10 before handing over to Rachel Woolner. Sam Allen ran the final leg in 14:56, the fastest time for a Beverley lady. The team finished in seventeenth place.

Ladies' Team Captain Kate Ladell was pleased with how both teams performed in Sheffield. "Everyone made pretty good

times considering the heat and terrain,” she said afterwards. Ladell enjoys relay competitions and encourages her club mates to take part as “It’s great to be part of a team, represent your club and region, and run for the fun of racing rather than always chasing a PB.”

Teams from Leeds City won both the men’s and women’s competitions with aggregate times of 41:41 and 36:01 respectively.

Beverley AC finishing times

A team aggregate time 47:05

James Pearson 11:11; Stuart Little 12:02; Matt Chadwick 12:08; Jonathan Leskiewicz 11:44

Incomplete B team aggregate time 44:53

Neil Bant 13:18; Darren Rodmell 13:10; Chris Woolner 18:25.

Ladies aggregate time 46:44

Kate Ladell 15:10; Rachel Woolner 16:38; Samantha Allen 14:56.



James Pearson



Jonathan Leskiewicz



Neil Bant



Sam Allen



Rachel Woolner