

Elswick Harriers Norman Woodcock Relays

Gosforth Park 25th November 2017.

Booze, Buff's, Bobble Hats & a Blast!

Last Saturday afternoon, as I drove into Gosforth Park with Paul Waterston we both saw a huge marquee next to the race course. It looked very impressive and we thought 'blimey, Elswick are pushing the boat on this one'!

Then we saw the sign "PROSECCO FESTIVAL"!



As we made our way to the more 'downmarket' area of the race course we knew we had a **BIG** problem!

How do we keep our ladies out of there until after the race!?

This new format relay event was for teams of 3 which must include at least one female runner. The 5 ladies we were expecting were vital to have any chance of success in the race. We knew that if it was an endurance drinking event then our ladies were untouchable but unfortunately for them they had to run 1.66 miles round the ambulance track on a freezing cold windy afternoon before they could get into the marquee!

Everyone duly arrived and we got the teams sorted and registered. Everything was going smoothly. People were heading to the course to get warmed up and I was heading across when I met Helen, Frankie & Lindsay going in the opposite direction to everyone else – **TOWARDS THE PROSECCO MARQUEE!**

As Team Manager I had to impose some discipline and their pleas that they needed more kit to keep warm fell on deaf ears. Their claims that “Scaifeys” ‘not like you’ didn’t wash with me! I knew it was vital that I maintained Peter’s high standards!

I dragged them back to the start line and soon the race was under way with Ross Floyd flying round to hand over to Helen King in first place! Poor Helen was the target for the chasing pack (it’s a horrible place to be) and she hung in to hand over to Sam Hancox in about 5th spot after running a really gutsy leg. Sam had plenty to chase and he pulled us back to 3rd overall. Ross also ran the fastest leg of the day which was brilliant! Congratulations to all of them.



Ross handing over to Helen at end of Leg 1.

The B team, (the youngster’s), Thomas Innes, Lindsay Turnbull and Dean Lonsdale ran really well to finish in about 6th place and they were backed up by;

C) Tim Miley (who turned out despite being distinctly under the weather – cheers Tim), Sue Smith (recovering not from injury but from Friday nights social at the Black & Grey!), & Paul Waterston.

D) Mike Winter, Pam Woodcock & Neil McAnaney

E) Paul Bellingham, Frankie Wilson & Jim Alder

As yet the full results haven't been published but well done to everyone who ran and all seemed to enjoy the event and the new format!

What was evident on the day was a real team spirit which was great to see!



Jim Alder with a strong finish!

It was back to the racecourse for the presentation where Pam reminded me of a door to door salesperson who opens their bag trying to flog you dusters, clothes pegs or other household items.

In Pam's case her bag contained Morpeth Harrier bobble hats and buffs and very nice they are too!

If you haven't got yours then speak to Pam or Sue – 6 quid each and a bargain!

A really enjoyable afternoon and well done to Elswick Harriers.

If you haven't taken part in a relay event then they are really good fun and they create a real team spirit and effort. The next relay on the calendar will be the Signals Relay at Hetton Lyons Country Park in February – watch the notice board and website for details and give it a try!



Helen and Sam with their prize – a proud dad in the background!



Paul B, Pam, Sue, Frankie, Sam, Helen, Jim, Lindsay, Neil, Paul W, Mike and Olly!

More pictures at; <https://kevinandlinda.smugmug.com/2017/Norman-Woodcock-Elswick-Relays-Nov-2017/>

Kevin Bray