Fantasy XC League 2017/18 – Race 1 Blog

With much fanfare and attendant excitement!? we have reached the 3rd addition of Fantasy XC League. The winter season is a month underway with some early XC as well as road races under our belts. As ever athlete performances are difficult to predict. This year I have taken over the responsibility of athlete pricing from JT and a quick squint at the Athlete Averages for the first race will reveal that I have made a bit of a fist of it, thus proving the point.

I’ll say up front that FL entries this year have been disappointing, but on the positive side there seems to be more athletes than ever training and competing- we had a record turnout of 110 for the first qualifying event of the season at Stanhill Farm; notably the veteran, or (as I prefer to call it) the masters, section which supplied 26 athletes notably the ladies who dominated the TAC SW team. The total included 22 FL debutants.

So Race 1 highlights:

Top points scorer with 200 was J Bryant, who presciently as it turns out, was the most heavily backed SM athlete.

There were 4 athletes that closed out last season with a 100% FL race record. Three of these maintained their record – Bede PK, Lucy Kingston and JT; the later two have a 100% record over the whole history of FL! Yea Go you!? The aim this year is to beat the 15/16 record of 7.

Best average for the day was the hopelessly under-priced Josh O’Brien- U15B, with 56 points per million and first into the Bullseye Club Lounge. Best Seeded Athlete Average for the day was 31ppm by O Dunn. Josh was only selected for two teams and Ollie not at all, so my poor judgement is clearly shared by most of you!

Best New Kid on the Block performance of the day L Knight (VetW) with 44ppm. Best performance in a new age group goes to G Fleming actually stepping up two age groups for 7th place in the SW race and O Breed -1st as a first year U13G. Step up in Class prize for the day apart from those named above I would probably go for A Jeddo with 12thin the U13B . Other Mentions in Despatches: H Patton (20.8ppm); T Bennett (42ppm); I Ellis (21ppm); O Bowart (28ppm); and L Stewart (17ppm).

Now to the main action – the teams. In the A team category (6 athletes; one athlete from each age group) the best score of the day was 506 from Tony Bennett’s Auditors A Listers team of Ian’s TAC ticks team of S Slack, M Wise, D Schofield, G Fleming, J Bryant and M Heslop. In the B team category (6 athletes from any age group) the best score of the day was 603 from Dan Schofield’s Too XC for my Shirt 2 team of F Gordon, M Watson, S Crick, J Bryant, J Stoney and J Rendall . Like the team name also. The best Player Manager team was, perhaps not surprisingly, Jamie Bryant’s First Team, also including L Stewart, S Coates, S Coppard, S Crick and G Saker with 408. And finally the best Bargain Team with 148 was JT’s Sloggers comprising A Roeder, A Thompson, G Hopkins, J Bingham, D Brown and M Dubery. At the other end of the table both Alex and Mark Hookway conspired to pick teams that scored “nil” points with Mrs Brown’s Boys and the Night Clubbers. A limited edition print of Pete Brenchley’s new autobiography “ My Life as a Feminist Icon” to both of you.

Due to the benefits of extra points for unused budget, (70 points per million) which are credited at the beginning of the season, the leader in the club house after one event is Brian Buckwell’s Nicki’s Choice team with 2442 .

Due to lack of popular appeal the Dreamteam series has been sold to an out of favour Hollywood studio.

Finally, the first nomination for the season defining, Terrible Team Names prize is last year’s winner F Gordon’s Nauseous But Georgeous ; a partly true reflection of its own spelling.

Finally, finally if you have not entered yet and wish you had, you still can; you won’t score any points for the first race, but everything else will be the same.