

BMAF Relays 20th May 2017 Sutton Coldfield

We had by far and away our most successful day at the British Masters Road relay championships. We had 5 teams in 4 age categories.





The Ladies W35 and W45 teams set off together at the early time of 10.30am. Antonia Skerritt W35 put herself in a good position and did not look out of place against some of the best Age group runners in the country, to finish in 10th position. Penny Pilbeam was more cautious at the start but worked really hard to come through to 20 sec behind Antonia and 14th W45. Nina Ridge W35 held 10th place and opened a cushion of over 30secs on 11th. Tracey Horne worked her way up 7 places for the W45 with a superb leg. Lucy P-K took the final leg for the W45 and held 7th place, less than a minute off the bronze medal place! Rachael Fagg continued to run well to gain 1 place with the 9th fastest 3rd leg. Sasha Houghton was largely isolated (a new experience after only ever having run 1st leg) but gained 1 place to bring the team home in 8th place as she ran the 3rd fastest last leg.

Highlights at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NcgqGXbdJj4&t=207s>

Next up was our best chance of a top 3 with the M55. Alan Buckle who has proved to be a very consistent racer and fresh from a 1500m 10 sec PB at Ashford was not afraid to put himself up at the front and was in 3rd place as they passed the ice cream van for the first time and only slipped back to 8th going down to the lakes, but he dug in well to finish in 8th place only 1m 25s off the leaders. Graeme Saker relished the challenge of working his way up the field and gained 5 places with the 5th fastest leg of the day. He finished 1 sec ahead of 4th place. In Steve Keywood's words "I needed more than a second" as the 4th place runner closed this down in the first 20 meters! However up ahead the last runner for Harrow was clearly their weakest and with a healthy lead over 5th place of nearly 1m 30 secs the top 3 places were likely to come from this leading 4. Steve showed his experience (probably the longest still competing TAC member) to run his own pace and once in 3rd kept his pace despite the sight of the Sheffield runner on the switch back who closed 1m 20s from 6th place.



Highlights of M55 at <https://youtu.be/1l02f4pSrXc>

Finally, the M45 took to the road with Phil Coleman running 10 secs outside of his time from 2016 for the A team, finishing in 26th. John Ridge ran a heroic 2nd leg after being away in Sudan for the week then being up all night with food poisoning before corralling 5 children up to the relays. He held on well and only dropped a few places towards the end, 32nd. Mark PK enjoyed picking off some of these and finished in 26th as the heavens opened once he passed the ice cream van on the way back, poor Tobin waiting at the start. Tobin had the worst of the weather for the whole of his leg but held 26th place which was equal to our previous best place last year.



The Mens B team was a mixture of M45 and M55. Tony Cohen had the unenviable task of taking the first leg, followed by Cain Bradley who had the last of the decent weather, before the monsoon conditions hit Brian Buckwell and Steve Brooks. Despite this Brian managed to better his time from last year, by 2 seconds. Highlights of M45 at <https://youtu.be/rb7UX2yjck0>

Many thanks to Alan, Di, Nicky and all the Ridge family for their support all round the course.



Park Run

Mean while, back in Kent Tony Bennett who was the only M35 who had been available for Sutton Coldfield, clearly peaked as he ran a massive PB of 18.41 !!