

Cross Country Review 2010-11

This is essentially a collection of Phil Baker's reports to the Observer over the winter. It is intended to give members something to look back on and possibly jog their memories, as it is now almost 6 months since we dusted off the old spikes and went hurtling through the woods at Goodwood. I'm also hoping it will inspire other club members, who don't currently partake, to think about giving it a go next season. There's at least two races a month from late autumn to early spring, giving you something to look forward to during those long bleak winter months. Conditions are much more variable than you get in road races, so there's no fretting over your stopwatch. You can just go out and enjoy the countryside and indulge in simple childlike pleasures like splashing through the mud and getting generally dirty (weather permitting!).

Running tends to be an individual activity and most of us race for our own personal satisfaction, but cross-country is very much a club thing. The courses are spectator-friendly and you get plenty of support from your club-mates, including Phil Baker who will convince you you can make up 50m on the guy in front with just 400m to go.

Highlights

Just like last year, the club picked a lot of medals this season, listed below. The juniors continue to punch well above their weight, thanks in no small part to the work behind the scenes by our hard-working coaches who continue to nurture emerging talent. At the other end of the age range, those of us in the twilight of our running career continue to find new competitive challenges over the country even as we inevitably slow down with each passing year.

Results round-up

Sussex League

Individual Medals (based on best 3 races out of a possible 4)

U15 Girls silver Georgina Warner

U15 Boys gold James McKenzie

Senior Men silver James Baker

V50 bronze Dave Dorning

Teams

U13 Girls 5th

U15 Girls 2nd

Senior Women 17th

U13 Boys 3rd

U15 Boys 3rd

Senior Men 6th

Sussex Masters Championships

Jane Leonard, WV55, Individual Silver

Dave Dorning, V50, Individual Silver

V35 Women Team Bronze

V45/55 Women Team Bronze

V40 Men Team Silver

V50 Men Team Gold

The Sussex Championship Team Shield

For best club in Sussex, taking aggregate results over all categories:

And the winner is... **Chichester!**

The Sussex Junior Team Shield

For best club in Sussex, taking aggregate results over all junior categories:

And the winner is... **Chichester!**

Race Reports in chronological order

[Goodwood cross country relays](#)

[Hampshire League Farley Mount](#)

[Sussex League Goodwood](#)

[Hampshire League Goodwood](#)

[Sussex League Plumpton](#)

[Sussex Championships](#)

[Sussex League Bexhill](#)

[Sussex Masters](#)

[South of England Championships](#)

[Sussex League Lancing](#)

[Inter-Counties](#)

Sussex Cross Country Relays at Goodwood 2nd October 2010

The morning's gale force winds and torrential rain eased just in time to give competitors good conditions for running, producing some fine performances.

Host club Chichester Runners & AC fielded no less than 11 teams across the age groups with over half producing top 6 finishes.

Stars of the day were the under 15 boys team who were given the perfect start by James McKenzie who not only sent them into a clear lead but in doing so clipped two seconds off the lap record in the process with a time of 9 minutes 10 seconds for the undulating 2800 metres junior course. Harry Leleu was next to go and kept Chichester in front with a 9.52 lap and it was left to Josh James to hold off all the other athletes except a fast finishing Eastbourne runner over the final 1000 metres. However a team silver was a great reward for their efforts as was a good run from Christian Cox as reserve in a non scoring team. The boys' run was Chichester's second success of the day as in the first race the girls under 13's had gained bronze medals for the second year in succession. Lying in 5th place over the first two laps with solid runs from Holly Beaton and Charlotte Reading it was left to Rose Ellis to charge through the field over the final lap to finish in 3rd with an 11.16 clocking. In the same race Maddie Smith and Molly Whatmore were useful reserves in the B team. In the under 13 boys race Chichester fielded 4 teams and with many of the athletes new to the club, team selection was a matter of judgment. In the event it was Dexter Bergman, running for a C team, who had the fastest Chichester time of the day with 10.57 clocking just ahead of Casey Keats with a 10.59 on the last leg of the A team. Keats brought the A team of Harry Lyne and Zac Hurst home in 5th while Bergman teammates in 10th were Joel Applebee and Henry Johnson. Just behind in 11th were Callum Strowger, Callum Bergman and Brody Keats while one place further back were the D team of Tim Mead, Tom Maynard and Sam Reading. For the under 15 girls it was Georgina Warner who had their fastest lap with Emma Maynard and Nicola Mead battling to bring the team home in 6th with reserve Lucy Ellis running for a non scoring team.

In the senior men, Jo Corbett produced a 13.03 clocking for the 4k lap including a couple of steep hills at the bottom of the course. Corbett's run was good enough to keep the club inside a closely packed top 6, a position maintained by Chris Bird on lap two. Then it was the turn of James Baker who ran a very

controlled leg to bring Chichester up to 3rd with a 12 25 clocking and second fastest lap of the day. The 4th lap runner, Jim Garland, promoted from the veterans because of his recent good form, was able to keep the Brighton and Phoenix athletes at bay but was being hauled in by a fast finishing Crawley athlete. Summoning his last reserves of strength over the difficult top part of the course, Garland held the 3rd place until the final corner where he was just not able to respond to the sprint finish of his younger rival to miss bronze medals by a mere 2 seconds. Elsewhere in the seniors Nick Casburn gave the club a good start for the B team followed by Martin Barwood and Mark Jennings. For the veterans it was a mix of ages which resulted in a 5th place with over 40's Tony Roddis and Andy Maynard joined by over 50 Tony Cooley and over 60 Don Faircloth.

Running with the senior women Katy Bird produced a fast run of 15.56 for the under 17's while a 6th place finish was achieved by Chichester's veteran trio of Eva Mikuska, Sue Baker and Tracy Jayant.

Hampshire Cross Country League at Farley Mount, 9 October 2010

The start of the cross country league season got under way at Farley Mount, Winchester. The best run of the day came from Georgina Warner with a superb 8th place in the girls under 15 event. A top 10 finish in this league is a sure sign of good form as the Hampshire league, including clubs from 5 counties, has produced many of the country's top distance athletes including Stephanie Twell and Charlotte Purdue who recently ran in the Commonwealth Games in Delhi. Following Warner home were Nicola Mead in 29th and Lucy Ellis in 31st out of a 50 strong field. For the under 13's both Rose Ellis and Holly Beaton had top 20 finishes with 15th and 17th respectively while William Kallaway was 50th in a very competitive boys race.

In the absence of James Baker who was wisely saving himself for the 20 mile Jog Shop Jog the following day, it was veteran Tony Roddis who led the way in 71st followed by James Woodward in 130th. Club Chairman Tom Blaylock ran well to finish 162nd in his first race back after surgery while evergreen 69 year old Terry Slade did well to make the top 200 in 194th. Having missed the start of the women's race Fay Cripps was allowed to run as a guest with the men and did well to finish 115th which should put her well up the field in her own category.

Sussex Cross Country League at Goodwood 23 October 2010

Luckily for the athletes the torrential rain forecast for much of the day did not materialise and it was only the under 15 boys who unluckily had to battle through the worst of the weather.

Not only were league individual and team positions important, but even at this early stage of the season, places in the Southern Inter Counties team were at stake with the first 5 in each race securing automatic qualification.

Georgina Warner with a 4th place in the under 15 girls race was the equal highest placed Chichester athlete on the day. With the leading pack for the first mile Warner had to let the two leaders go clear but was in with a chance of 3rd place for much of the race before having to settle for a well deserved 4th, her best result to date. Hannah Croad had an excellent finish for 14th in her first serious cross country for the club while fast improving Nicola Mead was close behind in 18th, shaving a staggering 3 minutes from her performance of last season. With a team total of 36 points Chichester hold third team place. Earlier in the day Rose Ellis had also secured an Inter Counties place with 5th in the under 13 race with Maddie Smith gaining useful experience for the future in 31st. In the senior womens race it was Jenni Harley who led the team home in 16th with her team mates bunched in the middle of the pack. Under 17 Isobel Brown, who has made her mark over the summer at both high jump and heptathlon, is using the winter cross country season as a fitness and conditioning base and was pleased with her 54th place, just ahead of veteran Amanda Godfrey in 55th and Kirstin Ogilvy 56th.

In the mens and boys events it was James McKenzie who had the best individual run in the under 15 race while it was the under 13's who put in the best team performance. McKenzie had previously set the fastest time in his age group in the relays but had to give way to an inspired run from Nick Rawbin from the Body works Tri Club in Eastbourne and was involved in a 3 way battle with Collier from Horsham and White from Phoenix. In the end McKenzie was just pipped into 4th with Harry Leleu an excellent 10th in his first year in the age group. These two were backed up by Joe Delaney-Stone who just outsprinted Thomas Ackerman for 27th and 28th respectively and reserve Victor Gulyas 36th. It was good

packing from the under 13's which resulted in a 2nd place in the team standings with Ed Gerwat leading the rest home in 8th closely followed by Harry Lyne in 12th and Casey Keats 13th. With good depth in this age group the B team lie in 8th overall with Brodie Keats 25th, Ewan Willis 27th and Dexter Bergman 34th while a C team is 15th with Callum Bergman 36th, Tim Mead 46th and Callum Strowger 47th.

Two of Chichester's stars in their summer track team turned in good performances in the under 17's with Ollie Smith gaining stamina for his 800 metres track season in 11th and pole vaulter Jamie Moore three seconds behind in 12th. In the senior race Jo Corbett led the team home in the absence of James Baker, followed by John Leonard in 41st, Martin Barwood 47th, James Pennicott 49th, veteran Dave Dorning 55th and James Woodward 79th. Chichester's B team on Saturday comprised Dan Turner in 84th, Tom Blaylock 99th, Chris Benham 116th and Tony Cooley 117th with reserve Graham Lyne 126th.

Hampshire Cross Country League at Goodwood 13 November 2010

The highest placed finisher for Chichester was James McKenzie with a fine 3rd place in the under 15 boys race in 14 minutes 53 seconds for the 4500 metres course, a time which would have seen him win the Sussex League held on the same course 3 weeks earlier. Together with other members of the Chichester club, in-form McKenzie is looking forward to the Southern inter-counties next month over the famous Parliament Hill course in London. Harry Leleu hung on well after a fast early start to finish in 24th place with 3rd scorer Tom Ackerman a solid 56th.

It was also in the under 15's that Chichester's girls produced their best individual result with an excellent 11th for Georgina Warner to go with her 8th place at the first fixture in October. After Emma Maynard with another good run in 19th, there was a fight for the last scoring place with Lucy Ellis just getting the better of Hannah Croad finishing in 28th and 30th respectively. Nicola Mead was 39th with sprinter Sophie Atkinson doing well in her first cross country event to finish in 52nd.

In the other junior age groups Rose Ellis once again led the under 13 girls home in 15th place followed by good packing from Charlotte Reading and Holly Beaton in 22nd and 27th respectively. Backing up as reserves were Emily Morley in 34th and Maddie Smith both of whom have 2 more years in the age group. In the boys under 13's 80 runners lined up in one of the biggest league fields for many years with Ed Gerwat leading Chichester home in 20th place followed by Casey Keats in 40th and younger brother Brodie not far behind in 47th just in front of William Kallaway in 50th. Gaining useful experience further down the field were Oliver Poole 73rd, Sam Reading 75th and Callum Strowger 78th.

In the under 17, Beth Garland crossed the line in 11th in the girls event while Jamie Moore had a good last mile in the longer boys event over 5000 metres to finish 24th, just in front of Oliver Smith and Ollie Pickersgill in 30th and 36th respectively.

In the senior races Chichester were disappointed to have no representatives in the 100 strong women's race but a strong showing of 14 finishers made up for it in the men's event where 250 runners had their usual cavalry charge over the opening small lap of the 9000 metres course before tackling the two longer circuits in the wooded section. James Baker decided to attack from the start and found himself in the top half dozen after a mile, finishing 8th overall. Next home was veteran Jim Garland whose 38th overall was good enough for 6th veteran and he was followed by an equally impressive run from Dave Dorning whose 90th overall was 5th in the over 50 category. New member Tony Radice was a fine 97th in his first race for the club, followed by three of Chichester's promising under 20's with Ed Porter in 106th just getting the better of Sam Bryan in 115th and Nick Mahoney 127th. Just in front of Mahoney was another Hampshire league first timer with Alistair Wakefield in 119th. The rest of the Chichester squad were Dan Turner 135th, Tom Blaylock 150th, James Woodward 156th, Chris Benham 161st, Andrew Moore 168th with over 60 Martin Miller closing the team home in 193rd.

Sussex Cross Country League at Plumpton 27 November 2010

Icy conditions underfoot did not deter competitors when nearly 400 runners turned out for the second fixture of the Sussex Cross Country League at Plumpton College on Saturday. With the organisers only having to change a small part of the course to avoid a deeply rutted section, conditions were better than expected and certainly suited the Chichester contingent with over half of their squad of 21 runners finishing in the top dozen in their respective races.

With two individual winners on the day pride of place must go to James McKenzie who achieved the best result of his cross country career by winning the under 15 boys event in emphatic style having broken clear at the halfway stage and building up a clear 14 seconds margin by the end of the race. Just four places behind was Josh James with his best ever run in fifth. Next highest placing among the juniors was Georgina Warner in the same age group with a 4th place closely followed by Emma Maynard in 6th, another Chichester athlete to achieve their best ever finish. Hannah Croad and Lucy Ellis were 14th and 15th respectively and brought the club home in 2nd team place on the day and 4th overall with just 12 points separating the top 4 clubs at the halfway stage in the season. Another of Chichester's junior teams to finish 2nd on Saturday were the under 13 boys where it was good teamwork which made the difference with Ed Gerwat leading the club home in 5th closely followed by Casey Keats 10th and Harry Lyne 11th. Equally impressive were the 'B' team of Zac Hurst 23rd, Brodie Keats 26th and Ewan Willis 29th with Sam Reading as reserve in 41st. In the girls under 13 event Rose Ellis in 5th and Charlotte Reading 7th were on fine form and are looking forward to the next match when a third scorer will make them a force to be reckoned with in the team standings.

The seniors for once had the best of the conditions underfoot as the course had softened by the end of the day's racing. There was a solid run from Amanda Godfrey in 55th in the women's race while the fairly tough terrain suited James Baker well in the men's event. With the winner of the first race at Goodwood absent the Chichester athlete decided to take things on from an early stage and had already opened up a gap over the rest of the 130 runners by the end of the first of the three laps of the 8 kilometre course. Baker kept up a relentless pace to win by over 40 seconds and still looking strong at the end. Next home for Chichester was Jo Corbett who is returning to form with a 12 place and the remainder of the team was a mixture of veterans and under 20's. Dave Dorning crossed the line in 50th and 3rd in his over 50 age group while Nick Mahoney in 63rd turned the tables on fellow under 20 Ed Porter in 67th, reversing their positions from the Gosport Half Marathon the week before. Ever reliable Tom Blaylock brought the team home in 80th to keep Chichester in 5th place in the first division although they will have to field their strongest squads after the New Year to repeat their top three finish from last year

Sussex Cross Country Championships, Stanmer Park, Brighton 8 January 2011

Chichester emerge as top overall Sussex club

There were perfect conditions for Cross Country racing at Stanmer Park, Brighton on Saturday where the top athletes in the county battled for medals in the Sussex cross country championships. With the seniors completing the programme it was the juniors who occupied centre stage for most of the day. Chichester were trying to finish as top overall junior club and it was not until the final junior age group, the under 20 men, that Chichester overhauled host club Brighton & Hove to retain their Junior Championship Team Shield by a mere 3 points.

Chichester were given a great start in the two under 13 races at the start of the programme with no fewer than three teams in each race. The girls were led home once again by Rose Ellis in a fine 6th place with improving Charlotte Reading close on her heels in 7th. A brave run from Holly Beaton in 13th closed in the team for a score of 26 points behind winners Hastings and agonisingly a single point behind Crawley for silver. Behind Abi Moss and Emily Morley led the B team, both in the top 30 with Gabby Venebles Kyrk, just outside in 32nd. Jade Bailey, Beth Rodgers and Zoe Nunn all finished well for the C team adding another vital point in the chase for the team shield. There was another good display from the under 13 boys with top 10 finishes from Ed Gerwat in 7th and Harry Lyne in 8th and a surprise from Brodie Keates to snatch the final scoring spot. With Brighton unassailable in the team event there were four teams in with a chance of the rest of the medals and when Keates appeared into view in the top 20 it was a question of whether he could beat the Phoenix athletes to the line. Spurred on by the support from the spectators, Keates left his rival trailing for team silver medals by a single point. Another promising youngster, Josh Eeles led the B team home in 20th and with William Kallaway 24th and Zac Hurst 27th, they finished 7th team. Good packing from Sam Pink, Oliver Poole and Sam Reading brought 10th place for the C team with Richard Venebles Kyrk in reserve.

Not to be outdone, the under 15's ran well although the girls squad produced the biggest surprise of the day. Georgina Warner had been showing excellent form in races before the Christmas break and continued her training right through the ice and snow of the Christmas period, together with the rest of the squad. This certainly paid off as she settled down in the top 5 from the start with only talented Grace Baker from Hastings able to establish a clear advantage from the rest of the field. Looking stronger as the race continued, Warner looked assured of a top three place with half a mile to go and then produced her best finish ever to snatch an individual silver medal. With

the team race seeming a 3 way fight between Chichester, Worthing and Brighton, both Emma Maynard and Hannah Croad were also having their best ever runs and were firmly established in the top 10 to finish 8th and 9th respectively for a team total of 19 points. Worthing then showed their mettle with two finishers in the top 5 and it was a nailbiting wait for their third scorer who crossed the line in 13th to give Chichester an unexpected but well deserved team gold. In the same race Lucy Ellis and Nicola Maynard both had top 20 finishes and Alex Fryday brought the team home for 8th place with Georgia Osborn and Clare Fraser reserves.

The unluckiest team of the day were the under 15 boys who had already lost league winner James McKenzie before the start due to illness and then having Josh James forced to pull out after the first lap with a knee problem. At the time he was running just behind Harry Leleu and with George Dempster, all 3 runners in the top 15 and looking assured of a team bronze. Leleu continued in fine fashion to finish 8th with Dempster 13th and a good run from Jamie Woolnough in 25th which left the team just 5 points off the medals in 5th place. Tom Ackerman, star of the indoor team, finished in 32nd to gain valuable stamina experience for the summer season.

Chichester's under 17's were disappointing especially in the boys where the club were without a single finisher for the first time in their junior history. Katy Bird and Lucy Thraves both ran well for 7th and 11th respectively in the girls race but were deprived of certain bronze medals by the lack of a third scorer.

So with just one junior race to go there were still 5 clubs who could emerge with the junior overall shield with Brighton, Chichester, Hastings, Horsham and Phoenix all in contention. Running over the same arduous course as the senior men, the under 20's had to tackle 5 miles of strength sapping terrain. Not to be put off by the challenge a quartet of Ed Porter, Nick Mahoney, Sam Bryan and Wilf Hill all stuck to their task with Porter leading the way home in 10th place in just over 30 minutes. The other three finished comfortably inside the 40 minute barrier to take bronze team medals and snatch the team shield away from Brighton with Horsham in third for Chichester to retain their title.

Sussex Cross Country League at Bexhill 15 January 2011

Once again it was Chichester's juniors who gave a good account of themselves in all four races. Ed Gerwat and Harry Lyne once again led home the under 13 boys in 6th and 8th respectively. Casey Keates then completed the scoring for the A team with a good 14th place on his return from injury. The team finished with 28 points for 2nd place which leaves them with a strong chance of silver medals after the last match at Lancing manor next month. Brodie Keates led the B team home in 18th, closely followed by Ewan Willis in 25th with Sam Reading 32nd. For the girls Rose Ellis and Charlotte Reading celebrated their call up to the Sussex team with 5th and 6th respectively and with Holly Beaton in 10th their team total of 21 points was good enough for 2nd place behind host club Hastings. In the under 15 races it was once again Georgina Warner who caught the eye with another 2nd place. With Hannah Croad and Emma Maynard swapping places in 8th and 9th the team total was identical on 10 points to the Brighton race the previous weekend and good enough to come out on top. The position in the team standings could not be more exciting with Worthing leading with an aggregate score of 78 points from the three fixtures so far, just one ahead of Chichester on 79 and Brighton & Hove on 80. For the B team Lucy Ellis and Nicola Mead packed well in 24th and 26th respectively. Harry Leleu confirmed his recent strong form by leading the under 15 boys home in 6th place, less than 30 seconds behind the winner. With George Dempster in 8th and Jordan Brown 27th the team lies in 3rd place in the overall standings.

Chichester's senior men were pleased to have James Baker back in action to finish in 2nd place behind championship silver medallist Ben Warren of Hailsham. Showing surprisingly good form after a recent lay off through injury, Baker matched strides with the winner for three of the four laps before having to give way over the final 2000 metres. Behind Baker there were good runs from veterans Tony Roddis in 28th and Dave Dorning 46th. But with just two more runners in the race, Tom Blaylock 83rd and Graham Lyne 110th, Chichester fell down the team standings to lie just above the relegation zone. Having never been relegated from the top division the club needs a good turnout in the final fixture on 12th February at Lancing in order to retain Division 1 status.

Sussex Masters Cross Country Championships at Lancing Manor 22 January 2011

Chichester emerge as top Sussex Veterans club AGAIN!

Chichester's best ever showing in the Sussex Masters Cross Country Championships at Lancing on Saturday resulted in medals galore and also brought the overall team shield to Chichester for the second year in succession. In an event postponed from before Christmas because of the snow and ice, Chichester were able to field their strongest overall squad in the club's 26 year history with no fewer than 38 veteran runners in action.

In the five team categories Chichester emerged on Saturday with four sets of team medals to go with the four won by the club's juniors two weeks before at Brighton to set another club record.

The women's race was first to go and Chichester knew they had strength in depth but were expecting to be pipped by the stronger clubs for the medal places. It was with much delight that the over 35's were first to learn that they had won bronze with Angela Carpenter leading the way to confirm her recent fine form with 6th place closely followed by Helen Pattison in 7th. With Steyning and Worthing already home with their three scorers it was Katherine Bond who came into sight for 13th place to edge out the normally invincible Arena squad for third place. In fact Bond had Trudi Cunningham and Rachel MacKinney right behind her to lead the B team to a fine 5th with Shan Langley closing the scoring in 19th. Then for the first time ever a complete 3rd team closed in to give Chichester more valuable team points towards the overall total with Eva Mikuska 21st, Alison Defries 23rd and Debbie Lord 24th. Not to be outdone, the over 45's packed well with their three scorers filling 10th, 11th and 12th places thanks to Amanda Godfrey, Tracy Jayant and Jane Leonard with Leonard also scoring an individual silver for 2nd place in the over 55 category. Teamwise it was clear that both Brighton and Arena were fighting for gold but the final place was between Chichester, Worthing, Hailsham and Crawley. Once again it was the fact that Chichester three finishers were separated by less than a minute which clinched another team bronze. Sue Barty led the B team home in 20th closely followed by Sarah Richardson in 24th and Carol Palmer 26th and Lynn Harley reserve in 27th.

The 30 team shield points picked up by the women had brought Chichester to within 3 of leaders Brighton and Hove with only the men's race to go. Usually split into two races, the 3 veteran men's categories were all on the start line together which made for a competitive race. Chichester were less confident than usual about their medal chances, especially in the over 40 race where they had lost two of the quartet who had so narrowly missed out on gold the year before. With Andy Nicholson now working abroad and Gary Wright suffering with a long term injury, it was left to the two remaining team members Jim Garland and Chris Jack to lead the way. Starting conservatively just inside the top 20 the pair gradually made their way through the field and spurred each other on during the second of the two climbs up to the downs. They were rewarded with a fine last mile to finish in a virtual dead heat for 8th place with Garland getting the nod by the thickness of a vest. Behind them it was Tony Roddis who was less than a minute behind in 14th and Lee Neumann just outside the top 20 in 22nd with reserve Steve Hasler also inside the top 30 in 28th place. There was an anxious wait for the medal presentation with last year's winners Crawley certain of gold, having finished with 4 in the top 6, but with the minor placings a straight fight between Chichester and their two perennial rivals Brighton and Phoenix. In the event it was a most unexpected silver for Chichester by 10 clear points with yet again the close packing the secret of their success.

The over 50's lined up with no less than 10 runners on the start line and were attempting to continue an unbroken run of success by winning their 8th team medal in successive seasons. For most of that time the same 3 athletes have featured in the scoring team, making them the most consistently successful team of the last decade or more. Once again it was Dave Dorning who turned in a superb performance to win Chichester's second individual silver medal of the day. Rob Wiggins was close behind in 5th and with Dave Worcester also making the top 10 in 9th they were too good for arch rivals Brighton who, in spite of having 3rd and 4th, had to wait until 14th to complete their team. Behind this trio it was club chairman Tom Blaylock who also beat the 3rd Brighton man in 13th followed by a rejuvenated Chris Benham in 17th and Kevin Lockyear in 23rd for 5th place for the B team. The C team had more impressive close packing than any other team on the day with Dave Reading in 25th just in front of Colin Harley 26th and Terry Healy 27th with just 12 seconds separating the trio. Just in case there were any retirements in front of him Alistair Kennaugh, just days away from his 60th birthday, also made the top 30 as reserve in 29th.

So with just one age category to count it was the over 60 men who had to hold Brighton at bay, the club having gone into an overall lead after the 3 scoring teams of the over 50's. With the club's potential top two unavailable in the form of Don Faircloth and Martin Miller, it was a great sign of their strength in depth that they were able to put two full teams onto the start line. In the event all 6 made it to the finish after over 5 miles of tough terrain with Terry Slade leading the A team in 12th followed by John Betts in 13th and Dave Betts bravely making it to the finish in 21st in spite of aggravating an achilles injury. With Brighton the over 60 team winners, Chichester cemented

their position as Sussex team champions when Peter Shaw in 23rd, John Holloway 25th and Dave Grunwell 26th all crossed the line to complete a well deserved B team and Chichester's 11th scoring team of the day.

South of England Cross Country Championships, Parliament Hill, London 29 January 2011

A smaller squad than usual made the journey to Parliament Hill Fields on Saturday but were rewarded with some fine performances in the South of England Cross Country Championships. Over an area stretching from East Anglia right through the home counties to Cornwall, a position in the top 100 of any race is no mean achievement. An indication of the standard can be seen with James Baker just failing to make the top 50, finishing in 62nd position. Going well over the first 6 miles of the 9 mile strength sapping course, Baker was the leading Sussex athlete for much of the race but just faded over the final 3 mile lap to allow Sussex championship runner-up Ben Warren to have the honour of being first Sussex runner home in 41st place. Next home of local interest was Jonathan Worcester running for his work team Metropolitan Police in 133rd position. This represented a remarkable comeback for an athlete who exactly a year ago was rushed to hospital needing an emergency operation. Another athlete who is returning to form as a senior was Chris West in 238th. Having enjoyed a fine junior career including a 5th place as an under 13 in the national Championships, West is now training hard to recapture his early form in the senior ranks. Tony Radice, who has only been running with the club for a few weeks, finished in the top 500 followed closely by club chairman Tom Blaylock while two of the club's over 60 veterans ran well to finish in the top 1000, John Betts and Terry Slade, the latter deserving special mention being just a few months short of his 70th birthday.

In the senior women's race, Fay Cripps had the best run of her career to date with an impressive 58th position just 7 places behind Holly Wheeler of Hastings, winner of the Sussex Cross Country league race at Goodwood earlier in the season. There was also local interest with Midhurst schoolteacher Emily Alden in 29th, running for her home club, Epsom and Ewell.

With several of the club's juniors choosing to have a week's break from racing to avoid burn out later in the season, there were nonetheless good runs from Harry Lyne in the under 13's whose 75th place was the highest of the day and a trio of under 15's. These were led home by Harry Leleu in 76th and just 3 seconds later by Josh James in 84th, such is the close packing in such a competitive race. A mere 20 seconds further back in 115th was George Dempster with all three athletes having another year in the age group. With the addition of Dan Eeles returning to form after injury, the quartet looks to have a great chance of gaining Chichester's highest ever team position in 2012 when the championships will be held in Brighton, their first appearance in Sussex for 47 years.

Sussex Cross Country League at Lancing 12 February 2011

Big medal haul AGAIN for Chichester!

Chichester finished one of the most successful cross country league seasons in their 26 year history by scooping a host of individual and team awards after the final match of the season at Lancing in Saturday. It was not only the juniors who were vying for honours but seniors and veterans as well and it was not until the final event that the senior men retained their Division 1 status for another season.

The day started with three out of the four junior teams in medal contention and it was the under 15 girls who were in the most nailbiting position, just a single point behind gold after 3 matches and equally another single point in front of bronze. As the 4000 metre race unfolded it was Chichester's Georgina Warner who was striding at the head of the field with Emma Maynard and Hannah Croad also in the top 10 at the halfway stage. Coming into the finish Warner had increased her lead to claim her first ever league victory by the impressive margin of 49 seconds and claim individual silver into the bargain. With Maynard and Croad 8th and 9th respectively their team total of 18 points looked impressive but league leaders Worthing saw their first two scorers finish in 2nd and 3rd places so it was a tense wait to see if their 3rd scorer could finish in 13th or better to equal Chichester's score on the day and win the overall trophy. Agonisingly after the first dozen had crossed the line it was a Worthing vest which next appeared into view to give their team 18 points and relegate Chichester to the silver medals by a single point. Fourth scorer on the day, Nicola Mead, also collected a team medal for her part in the season. In the boys Under 15's Chichester knew they had just too much ground to make up to catch the leading two teams but a

strong showing would ensure bronze medals. In the event it was James McKenzie who gave his club its second individual win of the day and in so doing claim the gold medal on countback. Harry Leleu was also having a fine run to finish in a best ever 3rd place and with George Dempster a solid 10th the trio were top team on the day with 14 points and easily claimed their team bronze medals.

The boys under 13's were apprehensive as the top two of the season Ed Gerwat and Harry Lyne were both unavailable so it was left to Casey Keates to lead the way with a good 8th place to be followed by Brodie Keates and Ewan Willis in 23rd and 24th respectively with William Kallaway in reserve. With a total on the day of 55 points they were just able to hang on to bronze medals by a mere 4 points by 142 to 146 over the season in front of a fast Hastings squad. It was the under 13 girls who knew they had too much to make up to get into medal contention after a poor team performance in the first fixture at Goodwood in October. However they have more than made up for it since then with bronze medals in the county championships in January and went one better with a second place on the day with Rose Ellis leading the way in 5th, closely followed by Charlotte Reading in 7th and Holly Beaton 8th for a team total of 20 points, just behind league champions Hastings but in front of Brighton, Crawley and Worthing who occupied the next three overall positions. The junior presentations also marked the feat of Chichester's whole squad in being presented with the Sussex Championship team shield won at the county championships in January.

While the club's seniors were not in line for team medals, it was equally as important for the men's squad to give a good account of themselves to maintain their unbroken stay in Division 1. This they accomplished with comparative ease with James Baker as usual leading the way with a fine 2nd place to ensure individual silver for the season behind Ben Warren from Hailsham, whom Baker had got the better of in the recent Chichester 10k. Next home was Ed Porter in 24th, one of the club's top improvers this season and well in front of a quartet of the club's veterans led home by Dave Dorning who secured individual over 50 bronze with 45th overall, followed by Rob Wiggins 52nd, Tom Blaylock 59th and Chris Benham 63rd. The second team comprised Martin Miller 79th, Colin Harley 89th, Jan Hill 91st and John Betts 94th while there were two representatives in the senior women's race with Fay Cripps having her best run of the season in 6th and Lynn Harley 74th.

Inter-Counties, Birmingham 5 March 2011

The highlight of the Great Britain cross-country season saw the best athletes in England, Scotland and Wales do battle at Crofton Park, Birmingham. The entry list is of the highest calibre and includes athletes who will assuredly be competing at world class level in the near future.

In the Girls' Under-13 race, Grace Cook from Eastbourne gave the best performance by any Sussex athlete on the day with 11th place in 11:46. Flying the Chichester flag were Charlotte Reading, 200th in 13:15, and Holly Beaton, 252nd in 13:42.

In the Under-15 Girls, in-form Georgina Warner finished 51st in 16:59, a tremendous performance in this high-class field. She finished close behind leading Sussex runner Grace Baker and just over a minute behind the winner.

In the Under-15 boys there were two Chichester runners representing Sussex: James McKenzie and Harry Leleu. James led home the Sussex team with another fine performance, clocking 16:18, just over a minute behind the winner, in 60th place. Harry finished just half a minute later in 129th.