

Restormel Junior Schools Cross Country – Par , Wednesday 11th February 2009

Dave Varney Writes:

The Restormel Junior School Cross Country League finished in the muddiest conditions seen in its ten year history at the Par venue & a further shortening of the course to avoid a huge swathe of flooded playing fields. Both previous fixtures had the finish area moved to overcome the danger of the young athletes sliding into each other but even that precautions still saw several end up skiing around the final bend! Having said that, all the rain & snow that caused the soggy ground conditions once again disappeared & all five of the winter fixtures were free of any heavy rain & most in sunshine!

For some 'guaranteed' individual winners, having won all four previous races, it was about keeping their record intact & helping their school match points & positions, which still had to be resolved but, fittingly, in the final race of the day it was a head to head to sort out the title winner of the Year 6 Girls. The Year 5 Girls & Year 6 Boys team placings all depended on this final match with some amazingly close scores.

Overall, Roselyon could look back on this season as their most successful, winning three of the individual titles & all four winners at the final event. It was also nice to see new school names coming into the frame as well as the more familiar teams that have enjoyed success over the long term. The conditions put paid to many records but there were still a few in the opening two events & overall, the numbers remained at an impressively high level.

The day opened with Frankie Aldred (Roselyon) scooting off to a massive lead by the time he crossed the footbridge, one he kept all the way to the finish & the first 100% record intact. Isaac Parker (Biscovey) has occupied the runners up spot in four of the five for this overall position with Oliver Dinnis (Roselyon) in a similar situation for third.

St Mewan were the most consistent of the school teams in the Year 5 Boys, with three wins but finishing second on the day to Mevagissey, who moved above Roselyon overall. Gorran finished third again on the day but missed out with low placings on the first two matches.

With three wins & a third, previously, Carla Ralph (St Stephen) needed a disaster to rob her of overall victory but Maddie White (Roselyon) was not going to let her have it all her own way & set off in hot pursuit of Carla's lead. Overtaking Carla in the second half, both were still chasing all the way to the line where only 3 seconds separated them, Maddie's win making her the overall runner up. Tegan Hooper (St Mewan) took the third place in front of Rhea Cross (Bishop Bronscombe) but Rhea's consistency in the last four matches gave her the overall third.

St Stephen had four in the top 17 places to keep up their impressive series of wins for the team title but the real drama was in the following places. Veryan, who only came

into the league half way through this year has seen a huge benefit from a more local Roseland competition & have made an impact already on this larger competition. They finish second on the day, St Mewan finished just two points behind them & a single point in front of Roselyon. The end result was not only an overall draw for second after taking the best scores for both St Mewan & Roselyon but adding their 'discarded' fifth score still could not separate them.

The second 100% record of wins came from Tom Dinnis (Roselyon) who looked totally in control as he headed off on the first lap of the playing fields but in the closest challenge of the five races, Luke Cannon (Fowey) kept the pressure on & closed the lead to 7 seconds at the finish. Josh Nesbitt (St Mewan) had previously finished second in all four races for the overall runner's up spot, Luke taking third.

In the closest team competition for some years. All placings were up for grabs but no-one could have predicted how tight this would become. Fowey needed a win to improve on their 9 points, which their young athletes duly obliged with a superb four in the top eleven. St Mewan also had 9 points going into this last match & with four athletes in 23 took second, whereas, leaders, Roche, with 8 points previously saw their lead whittled by their third place on the day. After discarding the 'worst' score of each, they all had 7 points! Therefore, Fowey's win & 10 points gave them the title with Roche & St Mewan drawing for the second place on 11 points each.

The drama continued into the final race where Bizzie Dinnis (Roselyon) held a one race win advantage over Bryher Freight (Grampond with Creed), who had to win to pull back the title. Previously, Bryher had set out like a bullet from a gun & on three occasions, had seen her lead clawed back by Dizzie. In a change of tactics the two headed off together surrounded by the other leading contenders. Gradually building up over the last half, Bryher was unable to fend off Bizzie's strong finish to give her the clear win in the end.

Isabel Semple kept up her improved second half to the season with another third place & led her Gorran School team mates to their fifth dominant victory at 3rd, 4th, 5th & 11th. The final race went to form with Tywardreath staying in the second place & St Mewan third.