

McGrady XC Race 5 Report – Tollymore

Race Report by Lorna Annett

Sunday 23rd February was the last event for the McGrady Financial Services Junior Cross Country Series. The race was hosted by Murlough AC and was held in the scenic Tollymore. MAC were new to the field, with this being their first year participating. The organisation and preparations were overwhelming at the start but with the guidance and help of Newcastle AC, the course was set up.

Weather conditions were perfect, which meant that the course was mainly dry with a few muddy patches along the way.

The race was attended by just over 100 juniors, which was a positive and encouraging sight, with participants from Newcastle AC, East Down AC, Burren AC, Dromore AC, and Murlough AC.

The biggest race to start the day was the P4 and under girls with 18 juniors taking part. Anna Kelly from Newcastle AC was first to cross the finish line in a time of 2.04. The P4 and under boys race was a close finish with 4 seconds between 1st – Harry McVeigh, 2nd – Joseph Uhomobhi and 3rd place – Thomas Corrigan.

As numbers were low in some categories, the boys and girls combined. The P5 race saw Maisie McVeigh win it for Murlough AC, with Conall Kelly, from Newcastle AC doing it for the boys.

The winners in the P6 race for both the girls and boys were participants from Newcastle AC with Henry Houston completing the course in 3.39 and Erin Easton coming in with a time of 4.12.

The P7 boy's race was another race with good numbers. 10 boys set off around the course with Newcastle AC's Quinn Devlin crossing the line first in a time of 4.32.

For the P7 girls, Burren AC claimed both 1st and 3rd place with East Down AC coming in 2nd. The top three were Ava McArdle, Erin Moore and Cliona Finnegan respectively.

As the distance increased, there was a decline in numbers so the Year 8 race was also a combined race. Dromore AC's Lily Rimmer was first home in a time of 5.20, followed by East Down AC's Aaron Lennon who came in 1st boy with a time of 5.28.

There was one participant in the Year 9 Boys race so he joined in with the girls race. Nonetheless, it was Oliver Robinson that was first home in 6.04 followed by a fellow East Down AC junior, Emily Burns in at 7.00.

The Year 10 race was a combined race of 7 participants. Lauren Madine flew through the finish line at 7.10, ahead of Anna McKernan (Dromore AC) and Aoibheann O'Gorman (Newcastle AC). Dromore AC's Kristian Brown won it for the boys in 7.19.

The final race, which was the largest of the day, saw Years 11, 12 and 13 join forces. In the boy's race, Mackenzie Murray (East Down AC), pipped everyone to the post with a finishing time of 7.17, with Kate McCartan from Dromore AC winning it for the girls in 8.30.

Well done to all the juniors who not only participated in this race but in all 4 in the series. Many thanks to the parents for their continued support and in allowing the juniors to participate. A huge thanks to all the clubs and coaches who helped to organise all the events throughout the series. Also for the warm welcome shown to Murlough AC and help provided on Sunday to make this a smooth event. Special thanks to Newcastle AC for lend of the equipment and help to set out the course on Sunday. In closing, a special thanks to McGrady Financial Services for sponsoring the series.