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2009

INTER COUNTIES CROSS COUNTRY – WOLLATON PARK NOTTS

A group of 5 Jersey Spartans junior cross country runners travelled to Nottingham last Saturday to represent Hampshire in the Inter – Counties Cross Country Championships and World Trials. This prestigious event has been held in the impressive surroundings of Wollaton Park for the last 11 years and is one of the major highlights of the cross country season with athletes representing more than 50 counties from the UK.

The course is widely respected as one of the most challenging in the country, with the infamous hill to climb right at the start of the race, long sweeping loops and further shorter but steeper hills. As well as individual honours at stake competitors are striving to place as highly as possible for their county, as overall county team medals are also awarded.

Fortunately conditions at Wollaton Park were very favourable on Saturday, particularly earlier in the day. The course was dry and firm, resulting in some very fast races and producing some excellent results from the Jersey runners.

In the second race of the day Oliver Terry was representing Hampshire in the U13 boys and undoubtedly produced the performance of the day. In this same age group last year he placed a credible 120th in his first race at this level of competition. Oliver was well placed in the lead pack of runners up the first hill and ran a superb race to finish 6th out of 294 runners. He was the second runner to finish for the county and helped Hampshire to a very well deserved team gold medal.

In the U15 boys race Elliott Dorey was hampered by a stitch midway through the course and was a little disappointed with his placing of 74th out of 304 runners, especially after having placed 21st in the Nationals two weeks ago. But such is the calibre of the field at this event to have placed in the top 100 is still an excellent achievement.

Felicity Johnson-Deeley was competing in the U17 girl's race and was hoping for a good result in her first year at this age group following her win in the Hampshire Championships in January. A very well paced, determined run placed Felicity in 26th position out of 249 runners and helped Hampshire to a team bronze. She will be very confident of her prospects for next year.

In the penultimate race of the event Danielle Leerson and Chloe Turmel represented Hampshire in the U15 girls, both in their first year of this age group. Danielle was hoping for a good result following her 11th placing at the Nationals and Chloe was hoping to make amends for her slightly disappointing race at the same event. Both ran with grit and determination in what was again a very strong field of runners. Danielle was placed 33rd and Chloe 38th out of 307 runners and Hampshire were unlucky to miss out on the team medal placings as one of their strong runners did not finish the race.

To have all five athletes place within the top 100 of this major race once again highlights the talent and depth of Jersey's junior long distance runners.