



King Henry VIII Senior School  
Warwick Road  
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Headmaster: Jason Slack BSc, MA Ed

## Relay Race Report 2017

The 46th annual King Henry Senior School VIII Relay Race took place on Wednesday 1st February, and as every year, teams of runners come to compete from all over the UK. Established in 1972, this Race has seen an outstandingly high calibre of runners – including national sporting heroes such as Seb Coe and the Brownlee brothers – and this year 80 teams attended, from as far and wide as Cumbria, Kent and Somerset. More teams come to the Race every year, attesting to just what a popular event this is within the UK schools XC schedule!

After much rain in the weeks leading up to Race Day, sunny weather prevailed over the afternoon, and spectators witnessed a glorious event, with superb individual and team performances from the young athletes. Every competing team deserved to be proud of their determination and effort, each team member covering a challenging 2.3 mile course through the War Memorial Park and surrounding woodland. It was great to see that despite the soft ground, 2017 saw some outstanding achievement – this year's Boys Race was won by Loughborough Grammar School with one of the fastest finishing times in the history of the race. Continuing a strong season, the team from Sevenoaks School from Kent carried off the Girls Cup in splendid style.

Congratulations for strong team efforts from our own competitors: the Boys were captained by Yuhang Xie, and comprised Arun Dahil, Matthew Catlow, Haaris Shareet, Ben Lane and Mohammed Abdullah. The Girls Team captain was Charlotte Cleasby, with team members Sarah Brown, Emily Smith and Hannah Pilbeam. They all ran hard and demonstrated good school spirit!

We were delighted to welcome this year's Guest Speaker, Liz Yelling – a perfect choice to speak to these young athletes about the highs and lows of running. Liz has been at the forefront of British Cross Country Running for the last two decades, representing GB at the Athens and Beijing Olympics, and winning four National Cross Country titles herself. After a well-deserved tea for all the runners, Liz kindly awarded the prizes, and spoke inspirationally to us about how to persevere, bounce back from challenges, and always aim high.

As well as the King Henry VIII's Relay Race being a national event, to which schools return year after year, we love to see local schools bring teams along. This year Woodlands and Tile Hill Wood (now West Coventry Academy), Bablake, Warwick and Rugby all attended. The hard work, athletic endeavor and enthusiastic support from parents, pupils and teachers created a fantastic atmosphere for this great event, which is an important part of our School's sporting tradition, and which firmly establishes the Race's reputation in the wider UK schools' Cross Country calendar.

Mr Andrews  
February 2017