



King Henry VIII Relay



30th Boys' Relay & 4th Girls' Relay 29. 01. 2003

St Albans school were the proud winners of the 32nd King Henry VIII 6 x 2.2 mile Relay in January. The team's victory in the boys race, added to their impressive record in the competition in recent years. It marked an unprecedented fifth consecutive win. The Judd school from Tonbridge was the second place team finishing a minute-and-a-half behind St Albans, with Winchester School in third. However, there was certainly no lack of competition; with 48 teams, it was the largest ever boys race. The Relay is widely regarded as the national schools senior Cross Country event of the year. Teams made the journey to Coventry from as far a field as Coleraine in Northern Ireland, Glasgow and the southern English counties.

Conditions were not ideal due to the persistent rain which fell in the week before. However, there were some great team and individual performances. The King Henry VIII team finished 29th in 2002, this year we improved considerably to finish a creditable 14th, less than 20 seconds away from a top ten position. It was the best performance for our school for 6 years. There were excellent runs from Sam Hornbrook, Colin Prue, James Sztejka, Stephen Iwanek and Daniel Halliday who all set personal bests on the course. A star performance was put in for the school by Stuart Boon who ran the 19th fastest lap (from 300 competitors) over the 2.2 mile course in a time of 12:29. This run moved us from 26th to 8th place at the end of lap 3. Unfortunately, we were beaten by just 3 seconds by our local rivals Woodlands School, but there is always next year to put that right.

Marling were awarded the most improved team. In 2002 they finished 30th, this year they moved up an impressive 24 places to finish 6th overall. The fastest individual lap times overall were some way off the best ever. However, Alex Hodgkinson of St Albans was by far the quickest with a time of 11:20. Craig Maud of Loughborough Grammar school was second fastest with 11:57 and Joe Macdonald put Manchester grammar school into the lead in the first lap with a time of 12:01, the third fastest time of the race.

It was also the 4th King Henry VIII Girls 4 x 2.2 mile Relay. Once again it was the biggest ever race, with 20 teams and there were some excellent team performances. The winners with the 3rd fastest ever time of 60.42, were Millfield school. They now equal QEGS Penrith's record (third this year) with two victories each. Uppingham continued their steady improvement in recent years by finishing second. King Henry VIII 'A' are a young team and were hit by injury, but did very well to finish 7th. Our team, comprising of Kathryn Stuart, Kylie Acford, Elise Windsor-Smith and Alice Griffiths all put in top performances. Alice was 25th fastest with a lap time of 16:11 and Kathryn ran 30th fastest with a time 16:14. Our B team finished 18th overall with good determined runs from Jessica Halliday, Justine Cain, Chloe Bell and Joanna Halliday. The fastest three individual lap times were by Freya Bloor of Millfield school with 14:26, Helen Maddick of Welbeck College with 14:38 and Rose Morrison of Uppingham School with 14:46. These times were once again some way off the best ever records, but creditable performances in boggy conditions.

Overall, this was another highly enjoyable Henry's Relay. The school looks forward to hosting the 33rd boys and 5th girls races next year. Please feel free to come along and support us. The date is provisionally set as Wednesday 28th January at 2:30pm in the War Memorial Park.