

Report from JIRC 2014 by James Nisbet

On Saturday 27th September I and the East Anglian Junior Squad travelled up to the Lake District for the Junior Inter Regional Championships. On the first day we all had individual races in Graythwaite. The area was mainly forest with some very wet swampy areas. We were treated to some great views across the valley, however being in a valley did mean we all had a lot of climb, with M18s having 360 metres climb over 5.85km. On my course the planners decided to send us over the top of the ridge that the area was based on, and then back over the ridge to the finish. This resulted in me having 215 metres climb over 4.5km on the M16 course. However it felt like a lot more as the majority of the climb was right at the beginning. On my run I was faced with the always difficult task of making up time after an awful control number one. This left me chasing everybody else straight from the beginning, however with some good other controls I managed a 22nd place finish. The best result of the day for East Anglia however, came from Tim Harrison who managed an excellent 5th position on M16.



After a good day of orienteering the East Anglian Junior Squad headed for Ulverston Victoria High School for the night. At the school we sat through the awards presentation (mainly dominated by Scotland) and then went back to one of the school halls where we would be spending the night. Here the whole of East Anglia took part in a traditional East Anglian variation of card games. This was good fun and a good way to get to know new faces. This was however followed by an early night in order for an early start for the relays the next day.



The next day we all took part in the relays. Now I should perhaps explain that compared to other regions (Scotland for example) we are a very small squad lacking in older juniors, so in

order to get 4 teams competing (2 boys, 2 girls) we had to have some people running up a class. So for the relays myself, Rebecca and Ella all moved up a class.

We were all looking forward to taking part in a relay at Roanhead, with some members of the team taking part in their first ever relay. The atmosphere was fantastic with 180 competitors taking part (but only 60 out at any one time) it meant that there was a huge crowd watching and cheering their teams on. This was made even better by the fact that the spectator control gave a great view overlooking most of the area, enabling us to know how close we were to the next leg of the relay.

The area we were running on was sand dunes with a contour detail of 2.5 metre intervals, making it hard to adapt to. Although there are sand dunes in the East Anglia region we rarely get to run on them, especially if like me you live in the furthest place in England from the sea!



Our aim this year was to have every relay team finish before the end of the awards presentations, as we had either just achieved that or not achieved that over the last couple of years. This year however we all managed to finish before the presentation! The boys A team however unfortunately mis-punched, despite them setting a very competitive time which would have seen them in 10th place. The boys B team (Josh, Steven and myself) finished a creditable 24th (out of 36) although it was the girls A team who did the best finishing 13th (out of 25) with Catherine, Daisy and Ella all having great runs. The girls B team (Rebecca, Chloe and Bronwen) also did well finishing 21st.

Overall in the results East Anglia came 10th in the regions (out of 11) by virtue of a 10th in the individual results and a 9th in the relay. However the weekend was not just about results – it was a great chance to meet some of our fellow squaddies from across the region who, up to now, we might have seen at events or on results lists but had never got the chance to talk to. What is also exciting is that our squad should get better – we have more in younger age classes than older and so next year we should do even better. Watch this space!

I'd like to thank Clive for his excellent organisation and many thanks to all the parents who drove us hundreds of miles to make the weekend possible, as well as the region who subsidised the fees.

James Nisbet



East Anglian Squad at the Junior Inter Regional Champs 2014:

Matthew Clarke (M14), Callum Turner (M14), Tim Harrison (M16), Roderick Mansel (M18), James Nisbet (M16), Steven Denby (M14), Josh Partridge (M16).

Ella Gilbert (W16), Bronwen Mansel (W16), Daisy Partridge (W14), Rebecca Nisbet (W14), Chloe Cracknell (W14), and Catherine Hemingway (W16),

(Photos by Sally Wilkinson)