

NORWICH UNION GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND TEAM

uk:athletics 

MEDIA:GUIDE

2008 UPDATE SHEET

15TH SPAR EUROPEAN CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS

Brussels/ BEL, 14 December 2008



Stats - European Cross-Country Championships

First held at Alnwick, Northumbria in 1994.

Venues:

1994, Dec 10	Alnwick, GBR
1995, Dec 2	Alnwick, GBR
1996, Dec 15	Monceau-sur-Sambre, Charleroi, BEL
1997, Dec 14	Oeiras, POR
1998, Dec 13	Ferrara, ITA
1999, Dec 12	Velenje, SLO
2000, Dec 10	Matmö, SWE
2001, Dec 9	Thun, SUI
2002, Dec 9	Medulin, CRO
2003, Dec 14	Edinburgh, GBR
2004, Dec 12	Heringsdorf, GER
2005, Dec 11	Tilburg, NED
2006, Dec 10	San Giorgio su Legnano, ITA
2007, Dec 9	Toro, ESP

British Team Positions

Men

1994-4th, 1995-3rd, 1996-5th, 1997-6th, 1998-4th, 1999-1st, 2000-6th, 2001-5th, 2002-4th, 2003-7th, 2004-3rd, 2005-7th, 2006-4th, 2007-4th

Women

1994-9th, 1995-7th, 1996-2nd, 1997-6th, 1998-5th, 1999-4th, 2000-2nd, 2001-2nd, 2002-3rd, 2003-1st, 2004-2nd, 2005-2nd, 2006-2nd, 2007- 2nd

U23 Men

2006-5th, 2007- 1st

U23 Women

2006-1st, 2007- 1st

Junior Men

1997-6th, 1998-2nd, 1999-1st, 2000-2nd, 2001-1st, 2002-7th, 2003-4th, 2004-3rd, 2005-2nd, 2006-5th, 2007-2nd

Junior Women

1997-3rd, 1998-7th, 1999-7th, 2000-1st, 2001-2nd, 2002-1st, 2003-1st, 2004- 2nd, 2005-1st, 2006-1st, 2007- 1st

MEN

Mo Farah (Newham & Essex); Lee Merrien (Guernsey Island); Scott Overall (Blackheath & Bromley); Michael Skinner (Blackheath & Bromley); Frank Tickner (Wells City); Phil Wicks (Belgrave Harriers)

WOMEN

Helen Clitheroe (Preston Harriers); Louise Damen (Winchester & District AC); Hatti Dean (Hallamshire Harriers); Laura Kenney (Royal Sutton); Gemma Miles (Kendal); Hayley Yelling (Windsor, Slough, Eton & Hounslow)

U23 MEN

John Beattie (Winchester & District); Alex Derricott (Staffordshire Moorlands); Keith Gerrard (Newham & Essex); Ben Lindsay (Aldershot, Farnham & District); Tom Russell (Bristol & West); Andy Vernon (Aldershot, Farnham & District)

U23 WOMEN

Hannah England (Oxford City); Susannah Hignett (Bournemouth AC); Stacey Johnson (Cannock & Stafford); Morag MacLarty (Central AC); Katherine Sparke (Woodford Green & Essex Ladies); Sarah Tunstall (Kendal)

U20 MEN

Phillip Berntsen (Winchester AC); David Forrester (Sutton St Helens); Nick Goolab (Belgrave Harriers); Mitch Goose (City of Norwich); Ross Murray (Gateshead Harriers); Chris O'Hare (Edinburgh AC)

U20 WOMEN

Lauren Howarth (Leigh Harriers); Emma Pallant (Aldershot, Farnham & District); Laura Park (Ellenborough AC); Emily Pidgeon (Stroud & District); Charlotte Purdue (Aldershot, Farnham & District); Stephanie Twell (Aldershot, Farnham & District)

TEAM MANAGEMENT

Head of Delegation - Niels de Vos

Team Leader - Spencer Barden

Team Official - Jenny Close

Team Doctor - Dr John Rogers

Team Physio - Mark Buckingham

Team Physio - Alison Rose

Team Coach Senior Men - Nick Anderson

Team Coach U23 Men - Steve Benson

Team Coach U20 Men - Mick Woods

Team Coach Senior Women - Wendy Sly

Team Coach U23 Women - Bob Ashwood

Team Coach U20 Women - Stella Bandu

Team Hotel

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Great Britain & Northern Ireland performances at European Cross Country Championships

Men

Gold Jon Brown 1996, Mohamed Farah 2006
Bronze Andrew Pearson 1995

Women

Gold Paula Radcliffe 1998 & 2003, Hayley Yelling 2004
Bronze Jo Pavey 2004

U23 Men

Bronze Andy Vernon 2007

Junior Men

Silver Chris Thompson 2000, Mohamed Farah 2001, Andy Vernon 2005

Junior Women

Gold Charlotte Dale 2002, Stephanie Twell 2006 & 2007
Silver Emily Pidgeon 2005
Bronze Charlotte Dale 2003, Charlotte Purdue 2007

History

180 athletes from 23 countries took part in the first edition of the European Cross Country Championships, whose winners were the Portuguese Paulo Guerra and the Irish Catherine McKiernan. The junior category was held for the first time in 1996 as an exhibition competition, the next year they became official and in 2006 the U-23 was included. During these 16 years since its birth, the competition has been consolidated in the international calendar and it is one of the main targets of the best European Cross Country runners. The most outstanding star in the history of this event is the Ukrainian Sergiy Lebid, who has been the champion six times (1998, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004 and 2005), whereas the Portuguese Paulo Guerra has achieved the victory four times (1994, 95, 99 and 2000). Regarding women, the only one who has been the winner more than one time is Paula Radcliffe (1998-2003).

Course

"Parc de Laeken". Located within a 15 minutes walking distance from the city centre, Parc de Laeken is one of the finest locations to practice cross country on Belgian soil. The surface is made of grass. Parc de Laeken has been used for several national and regional cross country events. Lap = 1500m

Format

In each race a team of 8 athletes may be entered
No less than 4 athletes and no more than 6 athletes may start in each race
4 athletes score for the team in each race each race shall be scored separately. In all races, 4 (four) athletes shall score.

Biographies of athletes not featured in the 2008 UKA Media Guide

SENIOR MEN

Name: Frank Tickner
DOB: 12 October 1983
Club: Wells City Harriers
Coach: Clive Thomas

- Frank was a good junior cross country athlete who also competed well over the steeplechase.
- As a student of French at Birmingham, he spent his third year teaching in Lyon in France.
- At the end of 2005 he made his senior international debut at the European Cross Country.
- In early 2007 declined a place in Britain's World Cross Country team due to the need to concentrate on his studies.
- In October 2007 he started work for News International in foreign logistics.
- In early 2007 declined a place in Britain's World Cross Country team due to the need to concentrate on his studies, but returned to the GB fold to run the 5000m at the European Cup finishing 7th.

Name: Phil Wicks
DOB: 14 March 1984
Club: Belgrave Harriers
Coach: Tom Osment

- Second in both the 2008 English National and 2008 Inter-Counties

Name: Michael Skinner
DOB: 21 November 1979
Club: Blackheath & Bromley
Coach: Conrad Milton

- Michael started his career over 1500m but has made a great impact in recent years over longer distances and cross country.
- He works as a Competition Manager for the Richmond and Kingston School Sport Partnership
- He is the current UK Cross Challenge champion.

Name: Scott Overall
DOB: 9 February 1983
Club: Blackheath & Bromley
Coach: Joe Franklin

- Recently returned from training in Ethiopia with training partner Mo Farah

Name: Lee Merrien
DOB: 26 April 1979
Club: Channel Islands AC
Coach:

- Won 1500m/5000m double for Guernsey at 2007 Island Games in Rhodes, Greece
- Finished third at recent UK Trials in Liverpool

SENIOR WOMEN

Name: Hayley Yelling
DOB: 3 January 1974
Club: Windsor Slough Eton & Hounslow
Coach: Conrad Milton

- Hayley's greatest achievement was winning the European CC title at the end of 2004 whilst leading the British team to the silver medals.
- She is an excellent cross country specialist, but has also performed well on the track finishing 5th and 6th in the Commonwealth Games 10,000m in 2002 and 2006.
- Her brother Martin, was a former 3000m steeplechaser and top duathlete. Liz Yelling is her sister in law having married Martin in 1999.

Name: Louise Damen
DOB: 12 October 1982
Club: Winchester & District AC
Coach: Nick Anderson

- Finished second and third in the first two events of this year's McCain Cross Challenge series in Gateshead and Liverpool respectively.

Name: Gemma Miles
DOB: 27 October 1980
Club: Kendal AAC
Coach: Bob Ashwood

- Won the Northern Cross Country Championships in Leeds at the beginning of 2008.
- Is ranked sixth in the country for 10k after a pb performance at the UK 10k Championships this year.
- She works as a physiotherapist at the Royal Orthopaedic Hospital in Birmingham.

U23 MEN

Name: John Beattie
DOB: 20 January 1986
Club: Winchester & District
Coach: Nick Anderson

- Hampshire based John transferred from Southampton University to the University of Tulsa where he was named 2007 Conference USA Male Cross Country Newcomer of the Year.
- He is currently working towards a Masters Degree in Business Administration (MBA).

Name: Andy Vernon
DOB: 7 January 1986
Club: Aldershot, Farnham & District
Coach: Nick Anderson

- Andy Studied Sports Science at St Mary's University College.
- Andy is a talented track and cross country athlete who has featured regularly in Great Britain cross country teams in recent years since his debut in 2004.
- He won the junior race silver medal at the 2005 European Cross Country Championships, and bronze in the U23 race in 2007.
- His mother represented Great Britain in rowing (coxless fours).
- Winner of senior men's race at trials and elected to step down to U23 for Euro Cross

Name: Alex Derricott
DOB: 28 November 1988
Club: City of Stoke
Coach:

- Won the Stone St Michael's 10k Road Race in June with 33.23.
- Was a promising cross country runner in his early teens and has show a return to that form in making the European XC

Name: Keith Gerrard
DOB: 24 March 1986
Club: Newham & Essex Beagles
Coach: Nick Anderson

- In 2008 he was 3rd in the Southern and 2nd in the British Universities CC before being the second finisher on Britain's silver-medal winning men's team at the World University Cross-country.

Name: Tom Russell
DOB: 11 October 1986
Club: Bristol & West AC
Coach:

- Competed at the European Under 23 Cross Country Champs in 2006

U23 WOMEN

Name: Hannah England
DOB: 6 March 1987
Club: Oxford City AC
Coach:

- Winner of 1500m at 2008 NCAAs
- Hannah is a top junior middle distance runner currently ranked third in the country for the 1500m.

Name: Susannah Hignett
DOB: 26 February 1986
Club: Bournemouth AC, Bath University AC
Coach: Martin Rush

- She is studying sport and exercise at the University of Bath.
- In 2007 she ran a 3000m pb of 9:19.17 at the Loughborough International and followed that with a 5000m best of 16:10.70 at Manchester
- She then won the England U23 title and was 9th at the European U23s. She was Britain's fourth finisher on the gold medal-winning team at the European U23 CC.

Name: Stacey Johnson
DOB: 15 April 1987
Club: Cannock & Stafford AC
Coach:

- Won the 1500m at the England Athletics under23 Championships in the summer of 2008, an amazing improvement from 12th place the year before.

Name: Morag MacLarty
DOB: 10 February 1986
Club: Central AC
Coach: Liz McColgan

- Winner of 1500m at 2005 European Junior Championships
- Recently finished ninth and seventh respectively at the Liverpool and Gateshead McCain Cross Challenge events
- Her appeal for inclusion in the Commonwealth Games was successful so she took her part as the youngest member of the Scotland athletics team in Melbourne in March 2006, although a calf injury three months earlier held back her performance.

Name: Katherine Sparke
DOB: 26 December 1987
Club: Woodford Green & Essex Ladies
Coach: Mick Woods

- Thriving at longer distances, after placing 7th in the National Junior CC, she reduced her 3000m best from 9:52.62 to 9:30.35 in 2007 and ran 16:46.60 for 5th in the end-of-season BMC Grand Prix. She was Britain's third finisher on the gold medal-winning team at the European U23 CC.
- She is studying psychology and nutrition at St. Mary's College.

Name: Sarah Tunstall
DOB: 19 April 1986
Club: Kendal Amateur Athletic Club
Coach:

- In 2007 was 17th in World Mountain Trophy and went on to make GB & NI debut at Euro CC
- She improved at 10km on the roads from 38:31 in 2006 to 36:47 in 2007, when she was 17th in the World Mountain Running Trophy, and she made her international cross-country debut at the Europeans
- She was 7th in the National CC im 2008.

U20 MEN

Name: Phillip Berntsen
DOB: 18 January 1990
Club: Andover & District
Coach: Nick Anderson

- Fourth in Trials in Liverpool

Name: Mitch Goose
DOB: 16 March 1989
Club: City of Norwich
Coach: Tim and Pauline Ash

- After a great early 2006 on the country, Mitch fractured his skull in an accident and suffered a blood clot in his head, which meant he missed the summer season.
- He returned to form in 2007 winning the English Schools cross country and 3000m titles.
- He is now studying at St Mary's University College.
- Mitch shares the same birthday as England and Arsenal striker Theo Walcott.

Name: Nick Goolab
DOB: 30 January 1990
Club: Ealing, Southall and Middlesex AC
Coach:

- Currently 6th in U20 rankings for 3k.
- Finished in second place at the Liverpool McCain Cross Challenge

Name: Chris O'Hare
DOB: 23 November 1990
Club: Edinburgh AC
Coach:

- Represented Scotland at the Commonwealth Youth Games in October 2008, finishing eighth in the 1500m

U20 WOMEN

Name: Laura Park
DOB: 31 October 1991
Club: Ellenborough
Coach: Brian Taylor

- Laura won an impressive seven national titles in 2007 including the English and British Fell Championships, and the English and British Schools Cross Country championships.
- 27th in junior women's race last year's Euro Cross at age of 16
- Improved further still that winter when finishing a remarkable 17th at 2008 World Cross
- Winner of 3000m at 2008 UK School Games

Name: Lauren Howarth
DOB: 21 April 1990
Club: Leigh Harriers & AC
Coach:

- Made her International debut in July this year at the World Junior Championships where she ran 9:16.92 over 3k to set a new pb.
- She in her first year studying Medicine at Birmingham University