

Riverside Runners : Junior Development Group

Junior Handicap : First Monday of the Month

1. Introduction

The primary purpose of the Junior Handicap is to provide runners with a measure of current form and motivation by comparing their time over the same course with that of previous months. It is also a simple, fun competition in which members of all abilities can compete equally with each other regardless of sex, age or running performance. It is open to all fully paid up junior members of the club aged over 8 on the day of the event.

The Handicap Run is not a race in the conventional sense. You don't have to be super fit or super fast to take part. The aim is to provide you with a measure of your current form, whether you're fit or unfit, a whippet or a tortoise, a new runner or a seasoned athlete.

The Junior Handicap normally takes place on the first Monday of each month (April to October – daylight) in the centre of Priory Park. Start times will be based upon a predicted finish time of 19.00hrs. The finish will be at the same place as the start.

2. The Rules of the Handicap

Handicap Times will be carried over from the previous month and will be adjusted throughout the season. If the Finishing Time is faster than the Handicap Time then the new Finishing Time will be the new Handicap Time. If the Finishing Time is slower than the Handicap Time, then the new Handicap Time will be increased by $\frac{1}{4}$ of the difference. Points will be awarded for finish position and for Season's Best runs.

For members competing in the Handicap Run for the first time no Handicap Time will be set and only one point can be earned. The Finishing Time in the first run will become the Handicap Time for the next run. If the Finishing Time is judged not to be an accurate reflection of the member's current ability, then the Handicap Time will be set by the Organiser of the Handicap Run.

Points will be awarded each month based on Finishing Position. First place will receive 20pts, second place 15pts, third place 14pts, fourth place 13pts, fifth place 12pts, sixth place 11pts etc. Everyone who completes the course and posts a time will score a minimum of 1pt.

Additional points are available – every time a runner records a new fastest time on the course in the current year, they will receive 10 bonus points. As SB (Seasons Best) times for the Handicap are based solely upon that year, no SB bonus can be earned for that runner's first time in any calendar year.

The series will be won by the person with the highest number of points from their best five runs and all PB bonuses. In the event of two or more members being equal on points at the end of the series, their position will be decided by the relative values of the [fifth] best scoring Handicap Run. If still level, then by the [fourth] best scoring run etc.

Anyone arriving late for their start, will still retain their allotted Handicap Time – they will just have to start late and run faster. Runners cannot be paced by spectators – this and cutting corners / cheating will result in disqualification. Cheering and motivational shouting from spectators is encouraged.

Juniors who are deemed by their parents not to be allowed to leave on their own straight after the event and cool down, must not be left at the event unsupervised by a parent or guardian of the parent's choice. Any Junior behaving in a disruptive or unsporting manner will be excluded from the event.

Because the 2011 Junior Handicap season is starting part way through the calendar the points accumulation will be based upon the best three results and all Seasons Best points from July to October inclusive.

3. Handicap Route

The route will be a simple, two lap clockwise circuit in the centre of Priory Park marked at turning points.

4. Risk Assessment

The handicap poses no significant risks for the club or its junior members who take part. However it is recognised that there is a marginally different bias to the hazards than those normally encountered on a club run. These are :

Potential mass finish Park environment chosen for entire event but especially for the finish.

Tripping hazard in the dark months There is no easy effective solution to mitigate this hazard and therefore it is not intended to extend the Junior Handicap season into the [Winter season]. It is anticipated that the Junior Handicap season will be April to October inclusive.