

**Callum Hawkins presents the Lindsays Trophy to Garscube Harriers
season 2017-8**





Callum Hawkins has hailed club development work across the country as crucial for athletics in Scotland.

The 2016 Olympian, now returning to full training after his Gold Coast 2018 marathon collapse, helped governing body Scottish Athletics present Garscube Harriers with the Lindsay's Trophy for cross country participation at three national championship events over the winter.

Garscube went from fifth the year before to winners this time with 106 finishers at the Lindsay's National XC to top a table which now comprises a remarkable 103 clubs having fielded at least one runner across the three events.

“What’s happening at Garscube is a great example of club development in Scotland,” said Callum, who has won the Senior gold twice at the Lindsays National XC but missed out this year as he prepared for Australia.

“I presented the Lindsays Trophy last year to Giffnock North and was more than happy to get involved again this year because I think cross country is really important to the sport in Scotland”.

“It was how I started out, really, and looking back that’s where I had early success – rather than in road running. My first Scotland and GB and NI vests came via cross country”.

“Garscube have gone from fifth last year in the Lindsays Trophy table for finishers to go and win it this year and for any club to manage to find 106 people to race the Lindsays National XC at Callendar Park really is a great effort. It’s credit to them and the coaches and team managers because that’s a huge representation for a single championship event”.

“I wasn’t able to race there this year with the Commonwealth Games coming up but, having been at Falkirk so many times in the past, I think there’s no doubt it’s an occasion where you can really feel the growth of the sport and sheer number of different club vests on show is always good to see”.

“It looks like the overall Lindsays Cross Country Season is growing year on year, too, with over 100 clubs featured in at least one of the three events at Cumbernauld, Kirkcaldy and Falkirk this time. I think what is happening is people are losing any fear of competing. Clubs are getting better numbers out and then they compete with each other”.

Trophy holders Giffnock, who won this award in 2016 and 2017, held an advantage heading into the Lindsays National XC at Falkirk but Garscube galvanised no fewer than 106 finishers at Callendar Park to conclude the season with 230 runners and top the table by 16 athletes.

In a hugely positive aspect for the sport, the 2017-18 table reveals that no fewer than 103 different clubs from the length and breadth of Scotland had at least one finisher over the three XC events.

Last year’s tally was 75 different clubs so the growth in terms of reach is obvious. Edinburgh AC won the Lindsays Trophy in the first year of the agreement with the legal firm, in 2015, and finished third this time around with Central AC and Cambuslang Harriers completing the top five. Making up the top ten were: Corstorphine AAC, Fife AC, Falkirk Victoria Harriers, Aberdeen AAC and Kilbarchan AAC.

“I would like to congratulate Garscube Harriers on winning the Lindsays Trophy this year, in the face of stronger competition than ever,” said scottishathletics chairman, Ian Beattie. Beattie is also Chief Operating Officers with Lindsays.

“We saw a significant increase in the number of clubs featuring across the three events that make up the Lindsays Cross Country series, from 75 last year up to 103 in 2017-18”.

“I was also delighted to see the growth in finishing runners per club, with 13 clubs recording 100 or more athletes participating in the events which qualify for the trophy”.

“This level of engagement reflects the great work taking place in athletics clubs across Scotland and we at Lindsays are pleased to support this work through our sponsorship of the series.

Garscube Harriers President Jill O’Neil said: “We are absolutely delighted to win the Lindsays Trophy for the first time.

Every year we make a huge effort to encourage all of our athletes out to the cross country to compete, spectate and support and it's fantastic to be recognised in this way. The National Championship events across the season encapsulate all that is good about athletics in Scotland right now and we thoroughly enjoy being part of them".

Callum Hawkins has won countless XC titles in Scotland and could well feature again next winter, with his schedule not yet decided.

"I'm up to about 80 miles a week now and training is a lot better than it was a couple of weeks ago," he said. "We're not at the stage where we can confirm at what may happen later in the year – there could be a marathon come December if things go well or there are a number of half marathon opportunities".

LINDSAYS TROPHY TOP 10:

Garscube Harriers 230

Giffnock North AC 214

Edinburgh AC 175

Central AC 167

Cambuslang Harriers 162

Corstorphine AAC 152

Fife AC 137

Falkirk Victoria Harriers 120

Aberdeen AAC 117

Kilbarchan AAC 116