



Media Release

27 May 2005

Ruyton overall winner at GSV Cross Country Championships

Victorian Institute of Sport athlete and St Catherine's School student Sam Beenie took out the GSV 2005 Senior Cross Country Championship title at a very chilly but dry Bundoora Park this afternoon (27th May, 2005).

Beenie's personal best of 14:31 was just enough to edge out Fintona Girl's School's Hayley Tomlinson (14:37), who took a fall half way round the 4km course.

Tomlinson had only recently returned from competitive running, following a stress fracture in February 2004. Before the injury, Tomlinson, as a fifteen year old, finished 11th in the under 18 Cross Country event at the 2003 World Youth Championships.

Ruyton Girls' School won the overall aggregate for the third year running, over MLC and Star of the Sea. Ruyton's Cross Country achievements are particularly impressive given its relative size (400 students).

In the Intermediate event, Ruyton's Lizzie Olayos won the 4km event with a personal best of 14:59 over Sacre Coeur's Laura Monagle (15:00) and Laura Eades (15:18), also of Sacre Coeur.

The Junior event was won by MLC's Grace Thek with a PB of 10:44 over Ruyton's Madelaine Cleeve-Gerkin (11:28) and Emily Norris (11:37), also of Ruyton.

Thek is a seasoned athlete having finished third in the 1500m at the 2004 Australian Track and Field Championships in Hobart and 8th at the 2004 Australian Cross Country Championships in Canberra.

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GSV Cross Country Champions media release continued...

Fittingly, St Catherine's 'old girl' and Olympic athlete Lauren Hewitt was on hand to congratulate St Catherine's Sam Beenie and the other winners of Girls Sport Victoria's Cross Country Championships and inspire them to go on to achieve greatness in sport.

"Nine years ago I sat on this same grass dreaming that I might one day compete at an elite level.

"I want you all to believe that, one day it could be you competing at the Commonwealth Games or the Olympics," she said.

720 girls from 24 independent girls' schools competed at the 2005 GSV Cross Country Championships.

GSV President Margaret Webb said events like Cross Country were a fantastic opportunity for girls and young women to discover the enjoyment and satisfaction of running, whether it be as a competitive sport or simply a recreation or fitness activity.

"Every year we have more girls trying cross country running for the first time as part of the GSV Cross Country program," she said.

"GSV believes school sport is vital in developing positive attitudes towards women's health and a lifelong involvement in physical activity and sport. "

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