

Girraween Athletics Club at NSW Cross Country Relays-(Waratah Series Relays) Miranda 26-5-18

On a beautiful autumn afternoon, which at various stages of the event's, was a little warm for the runners, a team from Girraween Athletics Club participated in these Cross Country Relays. This was the fifteenth consecutive year back to 2004 Girraween was represented at this meet. For those readers with a long memory, it would have been a little surprising to see such a dry course, but it made for fast times in a number of races.

The sole Girraween team in 2018 was the Men's 55+ team made up of Stephen Parkins, Rob Eager, Graham Sheargold and Mark Milliss. In a very competitive field all four runners ran well and most consistently and were well supported by their team-mates as they made their way around the course which they all appreciated. It was a privilege to support these athletes as they never gave up and represented Girraween Athletics Club well. We should not forget David Perry who also ran in the same event as an independent runner and he ran a superb sub twenty minute time on the challenging course. When he completed his run he supported his club-mates enthusiastically along with Michael Christie who was there to support the team.

Given that it was the fifteenth consecutive year that Girraween Athletics Club was represented at this event, it is time to reflect on the relevance of this event to Girraween Athletics Club going forward. GAP has done a little research and listed below are the years and number of Girraween Athletics Club teams who represented the club on each occasion.

Year	No of Teams
2018	1
2017	3
2016	3
2015	4
2014	6
2013	5
2012	4
2011	7
2010	6
2009	10
2008	9

2007	9
2006	10
2005	9
2004	2

As we can see the numbers of teams has decreased over the years, more often than not in line with the current number of registered athletes at a given time in a particular year. Nevertheless, it was still a little sad to see only one Girraween team able to participate in 2018. So naturally, the question needs to be asked, what can all members and friends of the club do to help increase these numbers in future years? There is no one simple answer to this, but it is certainly something that we as a club should talk about. Girraween Athletics Club over this period has built up a great tradition of team spirit and camaraderie at this event. It would be a great pity in the years ahead if this was to cease.

We would also like to send a big thank you to our winter competition manager, Lisa Grant, who in this instance was tasked with co-ordinating these teams. Lisa spent a lot of time trying to put Girraween teams together for this event. I am aware that Lisa tried very hard to put out more teams and she could not have done any more. Everyone is grateful to Lisa for her efforts. Results follow:

55+ Male 4 x 4km

Stephen Parkins	21:35	9th
Rob Eager	22:07	
Graham Sheargold	21:01	
Mark Milliss	24:21	Total: 1:29:05

David Perry	19:21
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Michael Christie	(GAP)
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