

South-West School AA Cross-Country Championships

Saturday 3rd February 2024

First Race 1.30pm

Hosted by **Somerset Schools AA**

RNAS Merryfield

Site Access from 11.30am

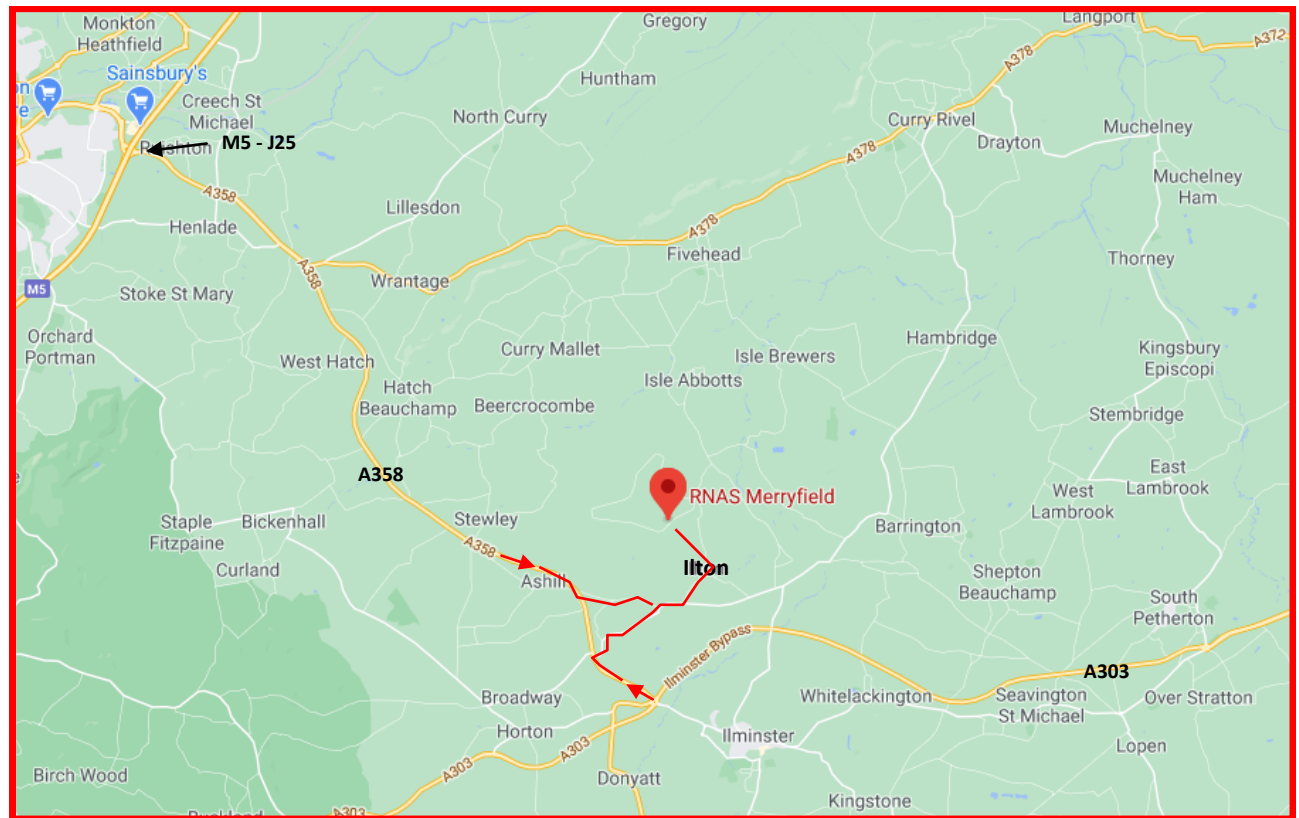


Somerset Schools AA is delighted to welcome athletes from across the region back to RNAS Merryfield, the venue for the 2012 ESAA Championships.

The course, set out over a north to south sloping terrain, contains grassland and forest trails. The prevailing wind is usually from the northwest giving assistance to runners along the deceptively long 'straight' to the finish.

If preceding days have seen much rain the paths deep in the forest may become quite muddy.

Fortunately as a working airbase there is much hard standing for coaches, cars, administration and for County team bases to be set up.



Ilton village and RNAS Merryfield are to the east of the A358 which links the M5 and A303

The South-West Schools and Somerset Schools Athletic Associations are most grateful to the Commanding Officer of RNAS Yeovilton for allowing these prestigious regional championships to take place at RNAS Merryfield.

South-West Schools AA County Cross-Country Championships 2024

NAS Merryfield, Ilton, Somerset

Saturday 3rd February 2024

An Initial Course inspection took place on Monday 23rd October 2023

with Brian Baker, Richard Llewellyn-Eaton, Paul Darcy

When the weather is good RNAS Merryfield is a glorious place to be! The inspection took place after much rain and thus the area was quite wet in places. The site slopes from north to south and therefore the southernmost areas are the wettest – essentially the fields either side of the bridge in the fields the other side of the hedge from the start/finish/admin area. It was thus decided that for the 2024 championships this part of the previously used course would not be used instead at the end of the start straight the course would turn right and follow a course parallel to the hedge. This shortening of the course meant slight adjustments to the course loops and race distances.

A Second Course inspection took place on Monday 18th December 2023

again with Brian Baker, Richard Llewellyn-Eaton, Paul Darcy

The previous weeks had seen some heavy rain but the days immediately before the inspection were warm, dry and breezy. Consequently the course was quite dry, with damp rather than muddy, conditions underfoot in the lower parts of the course. The grassland areas are covered in most places with ankle deep grass which due to the unusually warm weather is probably still growing!

The opportunity was also taken within the forest areas to remove fallen trees and branches impinging upon the course and also to 'mow' all the paths within the forests.


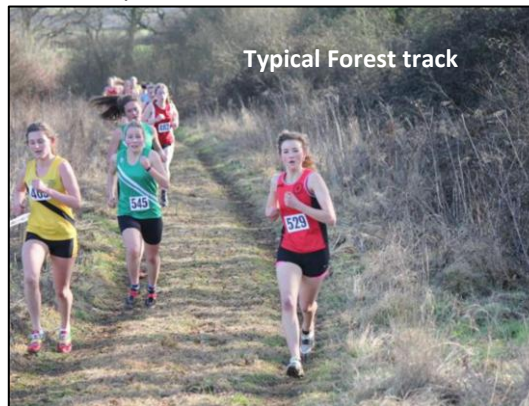
This information to form part of the Risk Assessment for the course.

- Course is grassland with forest paths.
- The area and course is covered in ankle height grass; the northern slopes of the course are driest with lying water, particularly in tractor tracks, throughout the area. The forests trails are relatively dry.
- Some gateways are of a scalping. New scalplings have been laid in sections of the forest trails.

'Points' displayed on attached Course Map

Point	Feature/Hazard	Risk level	Details
Start	Start	Low	Plenty of room for start: 80m+. Start area to be fenced off with stake and tape – right of start area tape/stakes dividing start from course loop; rear of start area designating marshalling area. Start area to avoid concrete manhole to be staked and taped.
Start - A	Start straight	Low	Distance from start to point A – approx 250m Ground is slightly downhill. Stakes/tape at 200m on right of start straight to be positioned around 'depression', which is a natural spring.



			
	Grass area	Low	Course continues east and slightly downhill to bear right 180° to follow hedge line into small Forest turning right to point B.
B	Exit Forest	Low	Course exits forest and then turns 180° left into second Forest
Forest 2	Small Loop	Low	<p>Course follows slightly downhill track, marked by using trees for securing tape where needed</p> <p>Course bears right and then right again along forest path to ascend incline to point C</p>  <p>Forests are out of bounds to public.</p>
C	Exit Forest	Low	<p>Course Small Loop swings RIGHT uphill on grassy slope to join finish straight at point F</p> <p>Course continues straight (bearing left) then turning 180° left downhill to enter Large Loop</p>
Forest 3	Large Loop	Low	<p>Course to be marked using trees to secure tape where needed</p> <p>Intermediate path in forest to be staked/taped to deny access</p> <p>Course enters forest down a slight slope; bears right (to left of pond), then left and right again following wide grassy path.</p> <p>Course swings right, then left up an incline to perimeter road and onto point F</p>
	Pond	Medium	<p>Pond on left hand side of course going into loop to be taped off and clearly marked as 'off limits'.</p> <p>Forest is out of bounds to public</p>

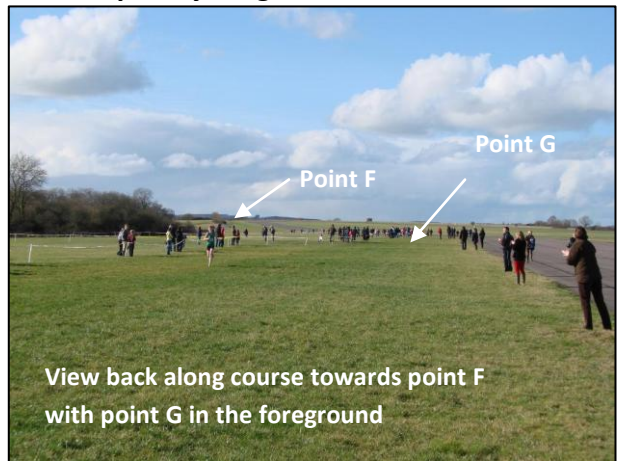


Typical grassy slope

Finish Straight

Low

The finish 'straight' from points F and G follows the line of the perimeter roadway towards the finish area. It is very slightly down hill and **deceptively long**.



View back along course towards point F with point G in the foreground

Mobile First Aid unit stationed on perimeter road thus with access to all loops and finish straight.

Point G to Finish

Low

The course bears right and then left down a small 'terrace', above point B, to swing left into the finish funnel or sweep right past the start area and onto point A

A shorter 'middle loop' bears right at point B to (re) enter the forest

Finish

Low

Finish funnel(s) to be marked by stakes and tape.
 Funnel(s) positioned to give immediate exit path onto tarmac area for prompt dispersal of athletes
 Finish area to be clearly staked/taped to give ample room for officials and out of bounds to public.

First Aid MUST have access to the finish area and have operatives within that area to deal with casualties immediately.

Vehicular Routes
 (See attached map)
 Tarmac/concrete throughout

Low

Entrance to the site not before 1130

Access to the course is through the village of Ilton to the eastern entrance of the airbase.

The road (country lane) from the village of Ilton to the entrance of RNAS Merryfield has much tarmac degradation coupled with potholes, which on the day of second inspection were marked by bollards.

All vehicles continue straight after the entrance to turn left along the main runway. Vehicles turn left off the main runway to continue straight onto the parking area.



So as to eradicate contraflow at the entry/exit and to alleviate congestion within the village of Ilton vehicles must not leave the site until 1430.

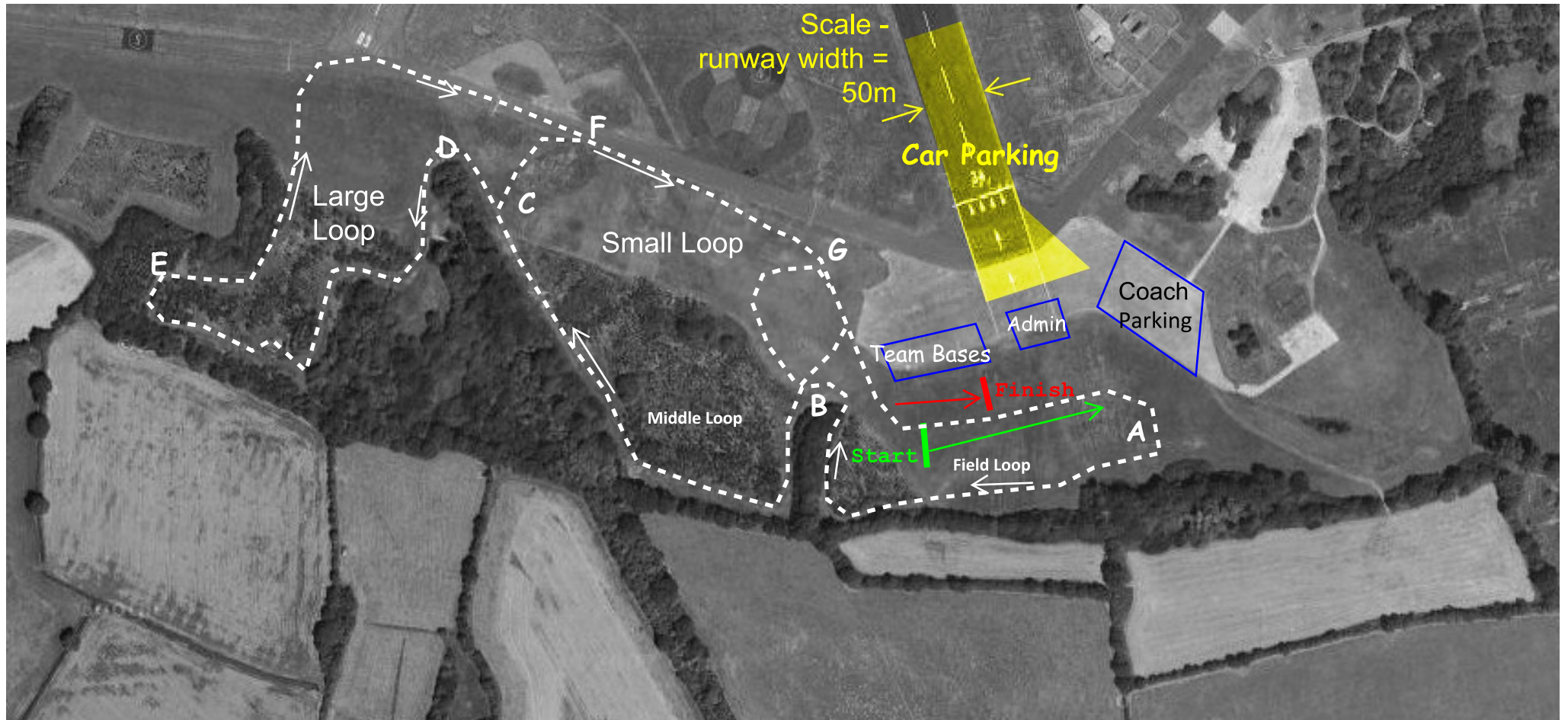
Exit is along the Perimeter Road towards the exit (same gate as entrance) and then through Ilton village.

BB

19/12/2023

RNAS Merryfield - course layout for **South-West Schools AA Cross-Country Championships** Saturday 3rd February 2024

The loops are 'taped' by the hedge lines surrounding fields or within wooded areas.
Thus minimal actual tape is needed but the course will be appropriately marked in open areas.



Course Loops

Large Loop = Start A B C D E F Start = 3200m

Small Loop = Start A B C F Start = 2100m

Middle Loop = B C F G B = 1200m

Field Loop = Start A B G Start = 1200m

Races Loops -

Under13 = Loops: Field x 2 = Start - A B G - A B G - Finish

Juniors = Loops: Small + Middle = Start - A B C F G - B C F G - Finish

Inter Boys = Loops: Small + Large = Start - A B C F G - A B C D E F G - Finish

Inter Girls & Senior Girls = Loops: Small x 2 = Start - (A B C F G) x 2 - Finish

Seniors Boys = Large x 2 = Start - (A B C D E F G) X 2 - Finish

Distances:

2400m

3300m

5300m

4200m

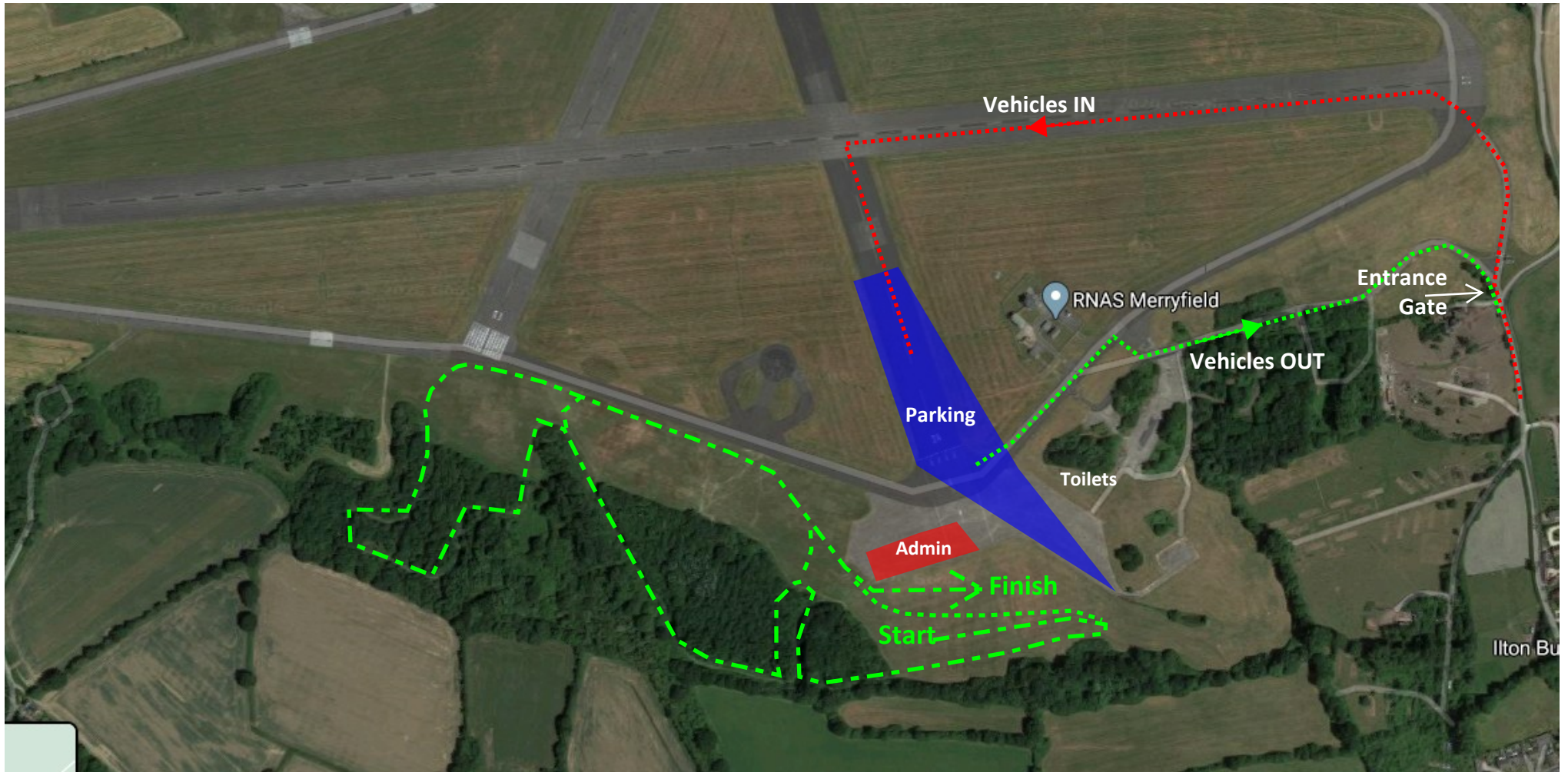
6400m

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RNAS Merryfield

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Time	Age Group	Loops	Route	Distance
13.30	under 13 Girls	Field x 2	Start - A B G - A B G - Finish	2400m
13.34	Inter Boys	Small + Large	Start - A B C F G - A B C D E F G - Finish	5300m
13.54	under 13 Boys	Field x 2	Start - A B G - A B G - Finish	2400m
14.00	Senior Boys	Large x 2	Start - (A B C D E F G) X 2 - Finish	6400m
14.22	Inter Girls	Small x 2	Start - (A B C F G) x 2 - Finish	4200m
14.44	Senior Girls	Small x 2	Start - (A B C F G) x 2 - Finish	4200m
14.59	Junior Boys	Small + Middle	Start - A B C F G - B C F G - Finish	3300m
15.13	Junior Girls	Small + Middle	Start - A B C F G - B C F G - Finish	3300m



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[Vehicular Routes within RNAS Merryfield](#)

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