

# Snow Stopping the Cross Country in Holyrood

✘ by Malcolm Anderson

A decent 7cm snowfall on Friday night made the 2011 BUPA Edinburgh cross country race today a true cross country test. Double European champion Mo Farah began 2011 in great style by winning the IAAF Edinburgh Cross Country at Holyrood Park.

Farah was the captain of the Great Britain senior side in the men's international team challenge, competing against the USA and European teams over the 8.2kilometre distance race.

The Somalia-born 27-year-old moved to the front shortly after the halfway point and steadily extended his lead. Weaving round the steep Haggis Knowe hill across from the main park proved to be a critical point in pushing ahead and breaking the other athletes. Speaking after the event to the BBC's Jonathan Edwards Farah commented:- "I wanted to do well here, it was something different and I really enjoyed it. I put a burst in but knew the guys had a strong finish, so I wanted to keep pushing and progressing."

With the 2010 season having been full of great wins including the double golds in 5000m and 10000m at the European Championships you might expect some pressure on Mo to do well. Asked if he was feeling this pressure Farah added: "No, it's something I worked hard for, I've been out in Kenya training hard. "I don't feel pressure, it's something I love doing every day."

American 5th place world indoor 3000m runner Galen Rupp was seven seconds behind Farah, while Spain's third-placed Ayad Lamdassem led the Europeans to victory against the United States (second), Great Britain (third) and Great Britain Under-23s/Under-20s (fourth) in the overall team challenge

results.



There was a Kenyan clean sweep in the men's 4km race, with the 2008

Olympic silver medalist in 5000m Eliud Kipchoge winning ahead of compatriots Asbel Kiprop (2008 Olympic 1500m Gold medalist) and Brimin Kipruto (2008 Olympic Steeplechase Gold medalist) Steve Vernon won the battle for Britain pulling away from Tom Lancashire over the final hill for fourth. Tom Lancashire was fifth, followed by Spain's Arturo Casado and Britain's Mike Skinner.

Linnet Masai, world cross country silver medalist in 2009 and 2010, led a Kenyan domination in the women's race. The world 10,000m champion pulled away around two thirds of the way through the three-lap 6km race from Dibaba and Cheruiyot. After the East African trio, European junior champion Charlotte Purdue enjoyed a fantastic start to the season fronting the British challenge for fourth place.