

# Running the Good Race



The cross-country team

Photo: Melvin Lee

*Many people would not be able to imagine running long distances every other day, but that is just what the RJC Cross-country team does. **Jeremy Yu** brings you a report on this group of Rafflesians, whose hard work paid off with admirable results.*

Imagine running 4.5 kilometres at a go. Now imagine you are doing this on a gravelly path, far from the relative comfort offered by your average running track. Then, add the weight of representing your school in a national competition. Oh, and you've just recently recovered from a major ankle injury too.

Put all that together, and you have a rough idea of what Lau Wen Loong, just one of the runners in RJC's cross-country team, went through during the Nationals on Apr 18th. Wen Loong placed 6<sup>th</sup> in the race, with a timing of 15 min 32 s.

Needless to say, stellar results can only be attained through equally stellar effort. Both the boys' and girls' cross-country

teams might have run the actual race itself last week, but in reality, the competition began months before. Training in cross-country is, as one would expect, a very long term commitment. Our runners had to come down for grueling trainings three times a week in order to prepare for the Nationals. To many, the seemingly repetitive nature of the sport might make such a regimen look unbelievably boring. However, the runners themselves beg to differ.

Runners might not be able to engage in the usual team bonding activities that other sports teams can due to the emphasis on post-training rest and recovery, but Alisa Ng, captain of the girls' cross-country team, feels that the training itself can be a bonding experience. This may be surprising to outsiders who do not understand the sport, but team spirit is an important aspect of running. Runners are not lone wolves; rather, Alisa believes that "if the whole team is running together, it really helps to push you to run

as fast as possible".

All this grueling training culminated in the Nationals at Turf City. Supporters from the various JCs turned up at the race, donning their school colours and bearing their school flags. RJC was no exception, banging loudly on our improvised drums and shouting our lungs out for our school.

The results were clearly admirable. The boys' team managed to clinch the A division silver, beating major rival VJC by a wide margin of 22 points, and narrowly losing the gold to HCI by 7 points. A strong display from the girls' team earned them the 4<sup>th</sup> place in their division.

At the end of the day, winning is not the only thing, as Melvin, the captain of the boys' team, pointed out. In his own words, "amidst the glitter of all the medals, it is the hard work and belief we put into getting these medals, that makes the whole experience so valuable."