

Junior Home Internationals – South Wales – Sam Crook M14

The Junior Home Internationals were held in South Wales this year. The individual competition took place on Merthyr Common, and the relays were held on Clydach Terrace. The event is a competition between England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales for M/W14 to M/W18 age categories. I (M14) and Katie Buckley (W18) were the two competitors from Airtenteers.

For the individual race, the area had lots of complex contours in the lower part and



enormous depressions — big enough to fit a house — in the upper part. However, the most distinctive feature of the terrain had to be all the rock features. I navigated well, taking an almost straight route choice to many of the controls. I did lose some time at number 13 when I went to the wrong crag, but luckily it was in the direction of my control, so I didn't lose too much time overall.

I came third, and I was very pleased with that result. Because I was the second M14 from England, I was placed in the second England team for the relays. Katie came fourth, and first from England.

The relay area was technical moorland with lots of contours and marshes. Due to a wildfire the previous week, much of the area consisted of burnt heather that had turned into marsh after water was used to extinguish the fire. This created the worst marsh I have ever experienced, and because it was so recent, the new marsh and burnt areas weren't mapped!

Our first runner completed his 5.3 km course in 33:44, coming back in first place and handing over to me. I ran my 3.8 km course in 29:25, coming back in second but right behind the new leader. It was a very close final leg between our team and the Scottish team. Every time we saw the runners, they had swapped who was in front until they came over the final hill — with England in first place! Katie's England relay team finished third.





Overall, England finished with 123 points, the same total as Scotland. However, because we had more first-place finishers in the individual races, England were declared the winners of the 2025 Junior Home Internationals.