

ENGLISH CHAMPIONSHIPS BUTTERMERE SAILBECK

It was another trip to Cumbria last Sunday for the 19 Todmorden Harriers who took part in the Buttermere Sailbeck Horseshoe Fell Race.

The 9.4 mile race, as well as being one of the medium length races in the club's fell championship, is a counter for the English Championships, so both individual and team prizes were at stake.

With 4650 feet of ascent, beginning at the blow of the whistle in Buttermere village, the arduous race was guaranteed to sap the competitors' energy and leave them aching for days afterwards.

Runners were faced with relentless climbs, undulating ridge runs and steep descents as they battled to tick off the five checkpoints at Ard Crag, Rigg Beck, Causey Pike, Eel Crag and Whiteless Pike. Fortunately the weather, although extremely windy in places, remained clear, affording splendid views around the whole of the horseshoe.

Bingley Harriers' champion Rob Jebb gained the victory once again, crossing the line in 1.23.39 and shaving several minutes of his own course record, set last year on a slightly altered course.

George Ehrhardt was the first Todmorden Harrier home, finishing in 21st place out of a field of 374 runners. This placing, together with those of team mates Chris Smale, Jon Wright, Andrew Wrench and Andrew Horsfall, allowed Todmorden Harriers to take 6th place in the men's teams.

Moyra Parfitt, putting in another notable performance for the local club, is on course to become the country's LV60 fell racing champion after she scooped first prize in her category for the second time in the series.

Here are the times & points for the race. As we know from the provisional results posted up on the day there were major cock-ups. Runners who timed themselves thought the times were out (too fast) by about 2 minutes.

Rob Jebb's time is listed in the results as 1.22.03 (dibber time) but the time on the official stopwatch was 1.23.49 so we have increased all the times by 1min 46sec. The points have been calculated on the new times. I hope that makes sense to somebody !

	Time	Adj Time	GP Pts	Fell Pts
1 Rob Jebb	1.23.49			
21 George Ehrhardt	1.34.05	1.34.05	99.5	99.5
31 Chris Smale	1.36.38	1.33.01	100.7	96.9
34 Jon Wright	1.37.06	1.37.06	96.4	96.4
42 Andrew Wrench	1.38.14	1.38.14	95.3	95.3
73 Andrew Horsfall	1.44.10	1.41.12	92.50	89.9
87 Shaun Godsman	1.46.57	1.46.57	87.5	87.5
131 Martin Roberts	1.52.08	1.41.53	91.9	83.50
161 Dave Collins	1.56.02	1.43.20	90.6	80.7
188 Paul Brannigan	1.59.47	1.56.22	80.5	78.2
238 Mark Goldie	2.07.47	2.07.47	73.3	73.3
241 John Crummett	2.08.41	1.42.29	91.4	72.8
244 Richard Leonard	2.09.17	1.58.39	78.9	72.4
249 Kath Brierley	2.10.36	1.48.36	86.20	71.7
278 Derek Donohue	2.16.43	2.06.43	73.90	68.5
279 Jane Smith	2.16.56	1.48.24	86.4	68.40
285 Rachel Skinner	2.17.37	2.04.22	75.3	68.00
294 Mandy Goth	2.20.12	1.53.51	82.2	66.8
327 Peter Ehrhardt	2.25.31	1.55.53	80.8	64.3
339 Sue Roberts	2.31.21	2.07.23	73.5	61.9
351 Moyra Parfitt	2.35.32	1.42.22	91.5	60.2

374 RAN

Our boys did well – we think they finished 6th mens team. A fantastic result when you looked at the competition.

As yet there are no team results up so not sure about the ladies.

An excellent race, one of my favourites, a bit of a shock to one or two members who haven't raced in the lakes before.

As Shaun Godsman crossed the line he was heard to utter "that was dreadful" to which Horsey & Wrighty replied "that was a proper fell race".

Get training for Wasdale – you thought that was hard!

Race Reports

Races reported recently in the local press

Grizedale Forest Trail Race

Todmorden Harriers' Grand Prix season continued last Sunday as 15 members of the club made the journey to the Lake District to compete in the Great Grizedale Forest Trail Race.

The race, which boasts itself to be "the most scenic traffic free 10 mile (approx) forest trail race in the country", follows the undulating paths which criss-cross the forest, affording splendid views of nearby Coniston Water and the surrounding fells.

With the uphill sections seeming to heavily outweigh the descents and the weather hotting up after the early morning cloud lifted, the competing Harriers were in for a tough race.

Paul Brannigan, who took little over an hour to complete the course, was first Harrier home in a respectable 15th place, while the first local lady to cross the line was the very promising newcomer, Sarah Glyde, who finished in 91st place in a field of over 300 runners.

Wardle Skyline

Todmorden Harriers returned to their familiar stomping grounds last Saturday to compete in the Wardle Skyline fell race.

An impressive 29 Harriers turned out for the popular event, which starts from the village square and climbs 1000 feet over Brown Wardle Hill, Middle Hill, Hades Hill and Rough Hill before descending back to the village.

The 7 mile race, which has been revived in 2005 after a year's break, attracted a quality field from all corners of the North of England.

Despite the muddy conditions, the race was fast and furious and saw Todmorden Harriers celebrating after the men displayed the strength in depth to pack the higher placings and claim the team prize. Chris Smale, Andrew Wrench and Jon Wright finished 2nd, 3rd and 4th respectively in a race won by former national champion Gary Devine of Pudsey and Bramley.

The local ladies also had cause to congratulate themselves, with Kath Brierley confirming her dramatic improvement by finishing 2nd lady, before former Harrier Sue Becconsall, with Jane Smith finishing in 3rd place after a flying descent off Rough Hill.

The Harriers will be hoping for another successful day at their next Grand Prix event, Buttermere Sailbeck, which is also an English Championship counter.

Connemara Ultra

Saturday, 27th March 2005

Would my wheels come off when I reached 30 miles, or would it be when I got to 35 miles ?

For those that don't know, the Connemara Ultra 39.3 mile road race is for you. Not only staged in the fabulous National Park on the west coast of Ireland, but surprisingly not that hilly considering that the race runs completely around the Maumturk Mountain Range.

Preparation for this was completing the Howarth Hobble (with Mandy) – some 32 miles up, down and around Hebden. This taught me the valuable lesson of maintaining a steady pace throughout the race. In this case it was at a pace that enabled Mandy to catch up on all the gossip. But it worked - towards the end we overtook loads of people that had started off too quickly and had burnt themselves out – now that was a buzz.

The Connemara race proved to be no different. It was actually to be a very social run. I talked to many people on the way round. When the aim is to finish the run quickly, it seems strange that you are holding back. Patience was the name of the game.

One aspect that I will cherish is all the ultra runners being lead through the main sports hall at the beginning. All the marathon and half-marathon runners were clapping and cheering – I felt very special. Then, due to the staggered starts, I was able to overtake some of them on the way round - double points I think.

So did I whap'm – yes I did. I came 16th out of a field of 57, with a time of 5 hours 56 minutes. That Guinness did go down rather well.

Rhys, Ultra, Watkins

THE LONDON MARATHON - 17 APRIL 2005

Can I do that ?' I asked Andrew
'Yes' – was the reply – and therefore the preparation began for one of the most prestigious Races.

Never having ran long distance before, running 26.2 miles was, without doubt, going to be somewhat of a challenge for me.

I set off in October, with Andrew by my side, to run a mile – gosh – never did a mile seem so far, not in the car at least. In distance running training, the goal is to increase the mileage. There isn't anywhere in Todmorden to go running without going uphill somewhere, but this proved to be an advantage in building up the strength in the legs.

In applying to the Race, we received a 'Flora London Marathon' running top. Not having possessed any running gear before, this article of clothing proved really useful as the weather since October had done everything except sunshine – possibly one of the worst Races to train for, as it was during the Winter months. Dark nights with heavy rain (and I've got to go out in this ?), Sleet, Mist, Force 10 Gales – even Snow.
Thought – this must be dedication.

Discovered that Hollingworth Lake was 2 miles 372 yards around and it was flat – so practically most weekends were spent there – becoming a familiar figure in the Blue London Marathon top running in circles around the Lake.

Once I had set myself a steady pace, the breathing became easier and the legs were beginning to respond to the distance.

The end of the year saw me competing in another prestigious Race – The 'Hot Toddy'.

Albeit half of the course was uphill and most of the competitors had finished before I had even got half way round the route – I felt really good at finishing my first race – 6 miles in under an hour (just !) – only another 20 miles to train for now.

Over the next few months I was training on Monday and Wednesday evenings and increasing my mileage at weekends.

There was also another goal in doing all the training and running the Marathon, and that was to raise funds for the Heart Unit at Manchester Royal Infirmary, where both our Dads underwent major Heart Surgery there last year and it was our way of saying 'Thank You'.

London Marathon Weekend – What a great weekend it was – from going to register at the ExCel Centre to actually running the Race. Most of Saturday was spent at the Centre where we registered, got our numbers, our 'chip' for our shoes, our kitbag and a bag full of goodies. We looked at the many stalls there and carbo loaded (as the need for all runners) at the 'Pasta Party' whilst listening to Jasper Carrotts version of the

London Marathon – where he hit 'The Wall' twice before getting to the start line.

We then decided to look around 'the City' and wandered past the London Eye, Big Ben, up Birdcage Walk to Buckingham Palace and down The Mall, watching all the preparation work going on for the finish of the Race, and then onto Trafalgar Square where there was a Youth Dance Theatre going on. The hype was mounting.

Race Day – and nothing prepares you for the feeling - this is it. Everybody was heading in the same direction – to the race. I was more excited than nervous. I stood in the Zone before the start, started the stopwatch and set off. The atmosphere was just electric. There were spectators every inch of the route, shouting, clapping, singing. There were Live Bands playing and music coming out of every Pub – in fact the whole of London was buzzing. Even the weather was kind to us. Felt good to run in dry conditions.

I ran for about 18 miles without stopping, passing the Cutty Sark and crossing London Bridge, but between 19 and 21 miles I had to have a breather – but didn't hit 'The Wall', just thought if I slowed down the pace a bit, it would stop the legs from wobbling. I wanted to finish the race in under 6 hours, so with tons of encouragement from Andrew and the fact that I knew the last part of the course, having walked round it the day before, I found an inner reserve and ran the last 4.2 miles at 12 minute mile pace to finish in

5 Hours 56 Minutes.

We crossed the finish line, picked up our medals and felt really proud.

I made it – and did our Dads proud too.

The organisation and logistics of it all was superb. I would recommend anybody of thinking about doing the London Marathon – to 'Go For It'. It was fantastic – hard work for a 'non-runner' – but tremendous fun.

I would like to finish by saying 'Thank You' to you all, for the encouragement and support you have given me and of course for your generosity in raising funds for the Heart Unit.

Also a 'HUGE Thank You' to Andrew for being my personal trainer and helping me achieve a challenge of a lifetime.

Will I do it again ? – Watch this space.

Caite.