

# **Press Reports**

## **Shepherds Skyline**

Fell runners from all over the North of England converged on the Shepherds Rest Inn on Lumbutts Road last Saturday as Todmorden Harriers hosted the 21<sup>st</sup> annual Shepherds Skyline Fell Race.

The race, ran over 6.2 miles with 1,150feet of ascent is one of the most popular fell races in the area, and this year attracted a bumper field of 240 entrants who tackled the moorland slog to Stoodley Pike and back via a couple of very testing climbs and 'kamikaze' style descents.

The race was won by multiple previous winner and former national champion, Ian Holmes of Bingley Harriers, who led from the earliest stages of the race. Giving chase to the winner were a posse of local runners, foremost amongst these was Karl Grey of Calder Valley, who made significant inroads into Holmes' lead in the latter stages of the race, crossing the line in second place, just 12 seconds adrift. Todmorden resident James Logue, who runs in the colours of Horwich RMI crossed the line in fourth, heading a closely packed group that included Todmorden's Andy Wrench and Shaun Godsman along with Calder's Adam Breaks. These three had had conducted their own private battle along the course and only five seconds split Wrench and Godsman at the line, finishing fifth and sixth respectively. Breaks followed some thirty seconds later for seventh place.

In the ladies race, England international Jo Waites of Calder Valley destroyed the rest of the field for an emphatic victory finishing over five minutes in front of her nearest challenger. Her superb run saw her shatter her own record by a startling two minutes and leave a number of the elite men trailing in her wake.

The team prizes were scooped by Calder Valley in the mens' competition after a close battle with Tod, whilst the ladies' prize went home with a strong team from Ilkley Harriers.

In addition to the senior race, junior races were held for the second time. These races were held over shortened but nevertheless tough courses, and gave even the youngest athletes a taste of 'proper' fell running. Local clubs' recent efforts to encourage junior runners seemed to pay dividends as large contingents of youngsters turned out from both Todmorden and Calder Valley. Competition was just as keen as in the senior races with several winners just edging their victories after exciting sprints for the line.

After the races, organiser Phil Hodgson thanked the Landlord and staff of the Shepherds Rest for their excellent hospitality and the Langfield Commoners for their help in staging the race.

## **The Tour Of Pendle**

Todmorden Harriers finished off Club's Fell Championship with the season's final long race last Saturday.

The Tour of Pendle is a classic 17 mile slog around the famous Lancashire hill. Runners start in the village of Barley before visiting 11 checkpoints in a slightly erratic fashion as the route climbs and descends several times before heading back to the village hall.

As with any race at this time of year, weather conditions are important to the competitors. This year icy winds, rain, and occasional hail made the race something of an endurance test as runners battled with the artic elements. These conditions were obviously to the liking of race winner Karl Grey of Brighouse, who runs in the colours of Calder Valley Fell Runners. His time of 2.19.27 beat international mountain runner Lloyd Taggart of Sheffield's Dark Peak Club into second place by a margin of just five seconds.

The combination of the inclement weather and events elsewhere meant that the contingent of Harriers who travelled into deepest Lancashire was slightly smaller than might usually have been expected for a club championship race. However, despite his lack of support at the 'sharp end', Shaun Godsman ran well to claim Tod's highest position in 11<sup>th</sup> place, some 15 minutes behind Gray. First lady Harrier to finish was Chris Preston who ran a superb race to finish in 4th position in a quality ladies' field.

## **Derwent Water 10**

In the week before the Tour of Pendle, the Harriers also wrapped up this year's road Championship at the Derwent Water 10, held in Keswick. The four Harriers who made the journey were treated to a testing course that made them earn their championship points! The race was won by Mike Scott of Border Harriers in a time of 53.56 after he out sprinted second placed Steve Littler of Wesham. Adam Breaks of Halifax Harriers ran well to come home in third. First Tod athlete to finish was Paul Brannigan in 44<sup>th</sup> position with a time of 1.04.13; he was followed some six minutes later by club mate Richard Blakeley who finished in 108<sup>th</sup> place.