

Race Reports

Races reported recently in the local press

Ilkley Moor

Todmorden Harriers kicked off their 2006 fell racing season last Sunday with the ever-popular Ilkley Moor fell race.

Regarded by many as a classic of its genre, the race this year attracted a record turnout of 328 runners, many of whom were participating in the Yorkshire Championships for which the Ilkley Moor race is a counter in 2006.

Lining up among the crowd on a cold and blustery day were 21 entrants representing Todmorden Harriers.

With its steep climbs and rough terrain, the 5 mile course with 1260 feet of climbing has variously been described as “demanding”, “a pure fell race” and “a classic of its kind that deserves its Category A status” (Category A being the toughest class of fell race).

Threats of snow came to nothing as the runners set out to tackle the arduous muddy climb up Backstone Beck to the famous Cow and Calf rock. Several backbreaking climbs and tricky descents later, the runners were heading back downwards, some out-of-control, to the finish line at Wells Road. Chris Smale, competing for the local club, powered home in 12th place, just 4 minutes behind race winner, Ian Holmes of Bingley Harriers.

Andrew Horsfall came in next for the Harriers in 24th position, just 36 seconds and 5 places in front of team-mate Mark Goldie.

Interesting tussles took place between Dave Collins and Nick Wigmore, who were only split by 2 seconds after a thrilling race to the line, and between Peter Bowles and Derek Donohue, who finished with only 8 seconds separating them.

Noon Stone

Snow and black ice were just two of the challenges which lay ahead for runners at this year's Noon Stone fell race.

The event, notorious for being one of the toughest local races due to its 2300 feet of climbing over a distance of nine miles, as well as its tricky navigational section, has often been referred to as “a bit of a beast”.

The heavy snowfall of the previous day fortunately gave way to warm sunshine and clear blue skies, which made navigation easier but was sadly not enough to melt the ice which had formed over the preceding few weeks and which sent a good number of runners skating in all directions on some of the steeper descents.

Fears of a lower than average turnout due to both poor weather and the event clashing with several other races, including the first race of the 2006 English Championships, turned out to be unfounded as an ample field of 112 competitors arrived on the start line at noon.

There was a flurry of excitement before the race began as television cameras turned up to film the event for the evening's news and runners will no doubt have tried to show their

best side as they set off out of Mankinholes to tackle the first climb of the day.

It soon became evident that the winner would be one of the three men who broke away from the rest of the field in the early stages of the race. This leading pack tracked each other for the entire race and, when they appeared over the hill for the final slippery descent, there was hardly anything between them.

The first man down to the finish line was Richard Pattinson of Pudsey and Bramley, completing the race in a time of 75.29, followed only 14 seconds later by Chris Miller, from Harrogate, and another nine seconds after that by Ben Mounsey, representing Stainland Lions.

Unfortunately, the race only managed to attract a handful of female competitors and it was Calder Valley's Jo Smith who used local knowledge to claim the ladies' victory in a time of 90.23.

Todmorden Harriers would like to thank Andrew Horsfall and Dave Wilson for organising this year's race, the Top Brink Inn for providing the race HQ, all those who consented to the running of the race and everyone who helped out.

St Annes 10

The popular seaside road race, the St Annes 10, this year attracted a massive field of 361 runners who were hoping to enjoy a pleasant run along the coast in bright sunny conditions.

Unfortunately, however, the weather turned just as the starter's gun went off and instead competitors found themselves battling against hail and sleet for most of the 10 mile race.

The course, a flat out-and-back route organised by the Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service, followed the coastline for most of the distance and featured a tour of the famous windmill at its turning point.

Todmorden Harriers' ladies enjoyed a couple of successes in the prizegiving, with the 2nd and 3rd veteran 40 awards going to Mel Blackhurst and Mel Siddall respectively.

Carding Mill Canter

The 2006 English Fell Running Championships got underway last Saturday with the Carding Mill Canter held at Church Stretton in Shropshire.

The six race series pits fell runners from all over the country against each other for both individual and team prizes.

The elite Todmorden Harriers men fielded a powerful squad who are looking to improve on last year's 4th place national ranking.

The team who made the journey south found that the Canter is possibly one of the most demanding short races in the entire fell racing calendar, as evidenced by the winner's time of 42.33 over a course of only around four miles, incorporating several steep climbs (1800 feet of ascent) and tough descents of the stunning Long Mynd ridge.

Conditions for the race were perfect, with a little snow remaining from the previous day, but not enough to make a difference for the 232 men and 60 women who turned out to take part.

A number of exciting tussles developed between the local club members, particularly Jon Wright and Andrew Wrench, who battled to the line with only one second separating them. Alex Whitem just managed to hold off team-mate Shaun Godsman by 17 seconds, with a similar time separating Andrew Horsfall and Mark Goldie.

After the results were in, Todmorden's leading five runners, Smale, Wright, Wrench, Whitem and Godsman, were pleased to find they had achieved 4th place, a two place improvement on this stage in last year's competition.

In addition, the Harriers' veterans also placed 4th in their class with a team comprising Smale, Wrench, Horsfall and Collins.

Full Todmorden results were: 22, Chris Smale (48.04); 29, Jon Wright (48.49); 30, Andrew Wrench (48.50); 36, Alex Whitem (49.36); 37, Shaun Godsman (49.53); 62, Andrew Horsfall (51.35); 69, Mark Goldie (51.51); 123, Dave Collins (55.57).

The team are now eagerly awaiting the next race in the English Championships, the Anniversary Waltz at Newlands in Cumbria on April 22nd.

Grand Prix Results

Ilkley Moor				
27/02/06	36.37	37.39	37.5	
	Time	Adj time	GP Pts	Fell Pts
Chris Smale	40.41	38.48	96.3	91.9
Andrew Horsfall	43.01	41.24	90.3	86.9
Mark Goldie	43.37	43.37	85.7	85.7
Nick Wigmore	47.13	47.13	79.2	79.2
Dave Collins	47.15	41.39	89.7	79.1
Simon Galloway	47.44	45.57	81.3	78.3
Deon Bamford	51.23	49.00	76.3	72.7
Peter Bowles	53.26	53.26	69.9	69.9
Derek Donohue	53.34	49.09	76.0	69.8
Richard Leonard	55.45	50.39	73.8	67.0
Jane Smith	57.12	45.17	82.5	65.3
Sharon Godsman	58.01	52.26	71.3	64.4
David Wilson	59.25	52.22	71.4	62.9
Richard O'Sullivan	59.38	55.48	67.0	62.7
John Page	62.29	52.45	70.8	59.8
Stuart Boulton	63.24	57.36	64.9	58.9
Janine Wigmore	64.11	58.00	64.4	58.2
Dave O'Neill	67.18	60.33	61.7	55.5
Tina Smith	69.10	62.30	59.8	54.0
Helen Hodgkinson	72.37	65.37	56.9	51.5

St Annes 10				
5/03/06	51.13	52.57	53.4	
	Time	Adj time	GP Pts	Road Pts
Deon Bamford	68.07	65.14	80.60	77.2
Mel Blackhurst	72.11	62.10	84.6	72.9
Richard O'Sullivan	74.05	69.55	75.2	71.0
Mel Siddall	75.05	62.18	84.4	70.0
Nigel Hanson	77.48	70.41	74.4	67.6
Mel Nichols	78.17	70.45	74.3	67.2
Francis Richardson	81.11	67.44	77.6	64.8
Claire Duffield	82.50	74.51	70.3	63.5

Half Tour of Pendle				
11/03/06	1.04.07	1.07.24	1.07.25	
Andrew Wrench	1.09.55	1.07.55	97.6	94.8
Shaun Godsman	1.12.03	1.12.03	92.0	92.0
Mark Goldie	1.15.42	1.15.42	87.6	87.6
Andrew Horsfall	1.16.29	1.13.37	90.1	86.7
Simon Galloway	1.22.09	1.18.20	84.6	80.7
Ben Crowther	1.25.11	1.25.11	77.8	77.8
Derek Donohue	1.27.05	1.19.55	83.0	76.1
James Riley	1.27.23	1.27.23	75.9	75.9
Keith Parkinson	1.29.08	1.16.54	86.2	74.4
Wayne Morrison	1.37.06	1.37.06	68.3	68.3
Mel Blackhurst	1.38.52	1.25.09	77.9	67.1
Richard O'Sullivan	1.42.08	1.35.34	69.4	64.9
Alice Heath	1.44.46	1.34.41	70.0	63.3
Claire Duffield	1.44.48	1.34.42	70.0	63.3
Sharon Godsman	1.49.29	1.38.56	67.0	60.6
Dave O'Neill	1.51.13	1.40.03	66.3	59.6
Mel Siddall	1.57.31	1.36.30	68.7	56.4