

November Press Reports

By Colin Duffield

'I love writing about nothing. It's the only thing I know anything about' Oscar Wilde

Accrington 10k Press date (31/10/07)

Road Battle Hots Up In Accrington

The latest round in this year's Todmorden Harriers' 2007 Road Championship took competitors into deepest Lancashire for the Accrington 10k.

The race tours the outskirts of the town through both suburban streets and quiet countryside lanes, en route finding enough climbs to keep the route interesting.

Sixteen Harriers made the trip, this number including some of the front-runners for this year's in-club honours. First Harrier to finish was a rejuvenated Kevin Booth, returning to the fray after a long period on the sidelines and finishing in 76th place in a time of 42.46. He was followed home by an evergreen Richard Blakeley who continued his rich vein of form to cross the line in 43.09 taking the V65s prize by a comfortable seven minutes, next came first Todmorden women, Kath Brierley who finished in a fine time of 43.51 placing her as 4th lady.

The contenders for Todmorden Harriers' titles came next with Sarah Glyde taking a break from her recent triathlon successes to finish in 44.40, pipping Mel Blackhurst home by 90 seconds to keep the Ladies' title race alive. In the men's title race Andrew Bibby staked his claim for end of season honours by finishing in a time of 45.29, giving him 112th place.

A happy effect of the Tod Ladies' intense competition saw them take the team prize, seeing off some strong challengers from other clubs.

The Road Championship will now go to the wire at next Saturday's Through The Villages Race in Chorley and the Gill Pimblott 5k in three weeks time



.Shepherds Skyline/ Through the Villages (Press date 8/11/07)

It's Elementary For Holmes

Todmorden Harriers hosted their consistently most popular fell race last Saturday as runners from all over the North of England converged on the Shepherds Rest Inn for 22nd Shepherd's Skyline Fell Race.

The race, ran over 6.2 miles with 1,150feet of ascent has become regarded as a minor classic in the fell running world and this year attracted 235 entrants who tackled the moorland slog to Stoodley Pike and back via a couple of very testing climbs and 'kamikaze' style descents.

Two notable features of this year's race were, firstly the quality of the field, which included not only top local runners but also highly rated runners from further a field, including several internationals and at least two former national fell running champions. The other very notable aspect of this year's event was the warm sunny weather, which was a complete contrast to the rain and wind, which has been more typical of the event in the past.

Despite this high calibre of competitors, when the race started it quickly became apparent that the race would be about just one person, as Bingley's Ian Holmes tore apart the rest of the field in a peerless display. By the time the runners were turning for home at Stoodley Pike, Holmes, a multiple previous English Champion, had a commanding lead over the rest of the field and never looked threatened. His finishing time of 39.25, saw him break the course record and cross the line almost a minute and a half clear of second placed Karl Grey of Calder Valley. Next home was Grey's team-mate Ben Mounsey, who was followed by a sizeable tightly packed group which included Todmorden's Shaun Godsman in 6th place and Alex Whitem in 8th.

The ladies race saw an equally emphatic win as Jo Waites of Calder Valley seemed untroubled in securing victory in a time of 48.55, comfortably ahead of second placed lady, Lisa Lacon of Holmfirth. Calder Valley ladies also secured the team prize after fine performances by Jackie Scarf in 9th and Clare Kenny in 15th.

In addition to the senior race, junior races were held for the third 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 a large numbers turned out from both Todmorden and Calder Valley, swelling the number of youngsters to over 70 entrants. 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 following day a number of Harriers were transformed from race organisers to runners as they competed in the 'Through the Villages' race in Chorley, the penultimate race in the clubs 2007 Road Championship.

Eleven Harriers completed the eight and a half mile tarmac route, which incorporates a couple of nasty climbs as it winds its way through the Lancashire countryside.

The race was won by Adam Sutton of Preston Harriers in a time of 44.50.

First Harrier home was a resurgent Keith Parkinson who ran strongly to finish the race in 58.44, giving him 85th place. Second Harrier was Richard Blakeley who finished a little under a minute behind Parkinson to take the veterans 60 prize. First Tod lady home was Sarah Glyde who crossed the line in 1.02.45, half a minute in front of club mate Mel Blackhurst.

Gill Pimblott Trail race (Press Date 22/11/07)

Blakeley Storms Home to Take Club Honours

Last Sunday saw the final fixture in Todmorden Harriers 2007 Road and Trail Championship as athletes travelled to Tyldesley for the Gill Pimblott 5k Trail Race.

In the hundred strong field, competition was predictably fierce as this was a short route on narrow tracks. The eventual winner was up and coming youngster Blake Ellis of Trafford AC who emerged victorious to finish in a very fast time of 16.08. Jayne Taylor of Wigan Phoenix took the ladies honours some three minutes later.

With local club honours in mind, the Tod athletes were generally limited to those who needed to complete the race to qualify for the Championship. First to finish of these was Richard Blakeley who took the veterans 60 prize with a fine run which saw him crossing the line in 17th place overall, one place ahead of team mate and former club Road Champion, Keith Parkinson. Next Harrier home was Andrew Bibby just a minute after Parkinson.

Melanie Siddall represented Tod's ladies and finished in 23.18, ranking her as third woman on the day.

Whilst the statisticians calculate the final placings in the Road and Trail Championships the remainder of the Harriers can look forward to the final race of the club's 2007 Fell Championship, which is the festive Gravy Pud Fell Race on 2nd December.

Gravy Pud (Press Date 6/12/07)

Gravy is Icing on the Cake for Smale

Todmorden Harriers Chris Smale took the veterans' prize at the curiously named 'Gravy Pud Fell Race' last Sunday.

The race is held in the Pennine foothills around Tintwhistle, Derbyshire, and tours woodland and farmland as well as open moorland.

Soon after the 120 entrants had been sent on their way by the starting hooter it became clear that Salford's international mountain runner, John Brown, would be the man to beat as he built an early lead with only a small group of athletes, including Smale, managing to keep in touch.

As the race progressed and the slippery conditions took their toll it was apparent that no one would beat Brown and he eventually came into the finish field unchallenged to win in a time of 34.32. The chasing pack started to arrive home some two minutes later with Smale 5th overall and first veteran 40.

Other local runners taking part in the race included James Horne of Calder Valley who finished 43rd in 45.53, and Todmorden duo Keith Parkinson and Louise Abdy who finished in 58th and 90th positions respectively. Also competing for Todmorden was veteran 70 Derek Clutterbuck who came home in 103rd place.

Whilst Smale was flying the flag in Tintwhistle, his fellow Harrier Jon Wright was also claiming a fifth placing in the Bolton-by-Bowland Fell Race in Lancashire. Wright finished in 50.43, two and a half minutes adrift of leader Thomas Cornthwaite of Blackburn.

Also at Bolton-by-Bowland were Calder Valley pair Tony Steward who crossed the line in 82nd position and Dave Culpan who finished 98th.

PILATES/ BODY CONDITIONING

We have a few spaces available for this class.

Thursday nights at Machpelah (corner of Station Rd) Hebden Bridge

7pm

Anyone interested please contact Mandy on 01422 844936 or 07915073393

The class is made up of some pilates (building up inner core) plus lots of stretching, balance work etc. The things you never do but should.