

Report Number 11.

The summer is well and truly with us and the number of races on offer is large and varied. The Staffs Moorlands Summer Series has been very well attended by Congleton Harriers. Thursday 12th June was at Oakamoor. The race is through varied terrain with some bottle necks near the start and a long run back in along the old railway track. Craig Hewitt was first male Harrier in 51st place in 37:50 and Charmaine Wood was the first female Harrier in 56th place in 38:08. The other Harriers who took part, in order of finishing, were Matt Belford, Jo Moss, Rob Parkin, Michelle Matthews, Paul Crean, Lisa Byrne, Lucy Rusbridge, Ali McNinch and Jacqui Moss.

The following week, June 19th, an even larger contingent of Harriers travelled across to take part in the Buxton event which includes a stiff climb up to a Solomon's Temple on the top of the hill. Bryan Lomas was the first male Harrier in 31:58 (14th) and Charmaine was again the first female Harrier in 36:52 (51). The other Harriers who ran were: Craig Hewitt, Matt Beford, Jo Moss, Debbie Hill, Michelle Matthews, Paul Crean, Heather Jackson, Lisa Byrne, Lucy Rusbridge, Ella Lyman, Helen Jeffrey and Jacqui Moss.

Thursday 26th June was the turn of the Roaches. On a clear evening there are fabulous views across to Tittesworth although there is little time to enjoy the scenery as nimble footwork is required to stay upright across the tops. Bryan Lomas maintained the first male Harrier crown finishing in 13th place (42:25) and Charmaine Wood continued to prove her worth by being first female Harrier in 51:00 (68). The other club competitors were: Chris Moss, Matt Belford, Michelle Matthews, Rob Parkin, Dave Taylor, Paul Crean, Lisa Byrne, Helen Jeffrey and Lucy Rusbridge.

The more recent Summer Series event was Shutlingsloe held on 3rd July. Whilst this is the shortest of them all at only 3 miles it is a stiff course being straight up to the top of this well known local peak. The race is renowned as much for the ferociousness of the midges as the steepness of the climb. Bryan Lomas was first male Harrier in 12th place (28:28) with Jo Moss taking the first female Harrier place in 35:15 (81th). Other Harriers brave enough to undertake the challenge were: Pete Newham, Craig Hewitt, Matt Belford, Michelle Matthews, Debbie Hill, Paul Crean, Jude Newham, Jacqui Moss and Helen Jeffrey.

The 14th June was the Skye Half Marathon- a race within spectacular scenery. Not surprisingly there was not the same large turnout of Harriers for this race with Bryan Lomas being the sole Harrier to be on the start line, having combined it with a long ride on his motorbike. The journey was worthwhile as Lomas finished 12th out of 450 in an excellent 1:21:17, which gained him 4th MV 40.

The following day, 15th June, was the Passing Clouds Fell Race; the second of the 2014 Congleton Race Series organised by the Harriers. Andy Roberts was race director and for the first time the event was held in June with the hope for better weather and underfoot conditions compared with the usual October. Unfortunately the change of date did not deliver on such expectations. A total of 178 runners completed the course with Simon Bailey breaking his own record for the course finishing in 1:07:01. Olivia Wallwin was first lady in 19th place in 1:10:05. Staffs Moorlands took the team prize. One Harrier ran and had an excellent race: Dave Clark, 31st place, 1:24:59. Ex Harrier Ruth Barry was 3rd Lady. A large number of the club were involved in marshalling, registration and results. Without such input the event would not have been able to take place.

Calton Fell Race took place on 17th June. Husband and wife duo, Chris and Jo Moss, were first male and female Harrier in 12th place (39:10) and 41st place (46:50). Jo Moss had a hard fought battle with fellow Harrier, Debbie Hill, with Hill coming in just behind Moss in 46:58. The two ladies gained 3rd and 4th L, and Hill also the accolade of 1st LVet. Dave Taylor and Michelle Matthes both had good runs being only 10 and 12 seconds behind Hill, respectively.

June 21st was a busy day with newcomer Ian Prime completing the South Downs Half Marathon, which had a last minute change of course and became 14.75miles instead of the standard 13.1! Prime finished in 2:23:26

On the same day, a number of Harriers travelled a shorter distance to Bosley for the fete and fell race. The results are as follows: Pete Newham, 13th, 36:12; Dave Clarke, 16th, 37:15; Charmaine Wood, 36th, 41:11; Debbie Hill, 55th, 43:45; Dave Taylor, 56th 44:04; Rob Parkin, 59th, 44:21; Michelle Matthews, 64th, 44:48; Jude Newham, 67th, 45:19; Sara Stead, 72nd, 46:13 and Helen Jeffrey, 88th, 50:10. 101 ran.

Rob Parkin was the only Harrier to do the Whaley Walz, a 6 mile fell race around Whaley Bridge and the Goyt Valley. Parkin completed the race in 56:41 (116th out of 163). Parkin decided to race on two consecutive days and did the Langley Fell Race on the 29th June. Unfortunately, a turned ankle half way round slowed Parkin down somewhat but he was actually pleased to finish at all in 30:44 (37th of 42).

Bryan Lomas went across the hills to his beloved Peak District on the 29th June for the Bakewell Fell Race. The 6.5 mile race attracted 177 runners and Lomas came 12th in 43:04. All finishers earned one of the puddings for which the small town is famous.

July 6th was another Derbyshire event for Lomas; this time the Chesterfield Spire 10 mile Road Race. Last year's event had seen all finishers also receiving a Bakewell pudding but this year's event was sponsored by Brampton Brewery. The ' prize' of a bottle of ale pleased Lomas who went home with more than the one for finishing. He was 7th overall in 1:02:43 which gained him the vets' prize of yet more beer!

July 6th was one of the Lakeland Trail events; this one being held at Coniston in the Lake District. Chris Smith had opted for the marathon distance. This was an extremely tough course and the hot weather made conditions more difficult. Smith was pleased to sneak in under the 4 hour mark at 3:59:29 and he earned himself a dip in the lake to cool down before donning the lovely blue technical T shirt for all competitors.

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