

October is a busy month for the Congleton Harriers. The hectic schedule started on the 6<sup>th</sup> with the successful Congleton 'Sting in the Tail' half and quarter marathons. However planning was already well underway for the Passing Clouds fell race, the third and last in this year's Congleton Race Series organised by the club. Meanwhile three teams of runners travelled to Llanberis for the 25<sup>th</sup> National Fell Relay Championships, and 26<sup>th</sup> October was the second of the four cross country events.

However, whilst groups of Harriers were getting together for team events and others were congregating to organize, marshal and otherwise assist at the Passing Clouds, Liz Reeves was taking part in more solitary pursuits. She has been training hard for some of the more challenging endurance events and took part in the High Peak 40 Mile Challenge on 21<sup>st</sup> September. Her punishing schedule paid off as she completed after 7 hours 26 minutes and 51 seconds which earned her 31<sup>st</sup> place out of 143 finishers and the title of second senior lady. Buoyed up by her success at Buxton she turned her hand to the Round Ripon Ultra; a 35 mile run in the scenic area around Ripon in Yorkshire. The race includes running on tracks through the parkland of Studley Royal near Fountains Abbey. Reeves had a good run and crossed the finish line in an incredible 5:59:40.

October 13<sup>th</sup> was the Windgather Fell Race, taking in 13.5 miles with 2500 feet of ascent. This is a particular favorite of Bryan Lomas and he travelled across with fellow Harrier Pete Carvell, both chasing points for the club winter competition. Lomas has completed this race in warm sun on previous years but this year the weather was less kind. The event started from Burbage Institute and goes up onto the moors where there was no escaping the rain. The stretch through the woods near to the Goyt Valley reservoirs provided some respite before the climb up to Windgather Rocks, which were living up to their name and then onto Shining Tor. By this time the mist and drizzle had set in and the soaked runners completed the downhill course to Burbage. Lomas performed well being 19<sup>th</sup> out of 181 finishers in a time of 1:46:47 and 6 minutes quicker than in 2011. Carvell was equally pleased with his performance being in the top third of the field in 2:06:09.

Three Congleton Harriers teams went to Llanberis to compete in FRA relay champs on 21<sup>st</sup> October along with nearly 200 others from across the country. The event was well organised by Eryri Harriers. Teams were competing in open, ladies, and vet categories. The event consists of teams of 6 which race over 4 legs, varying in distance from 7.4k to 14.7k. The first and last legs are the shorter routes for a single runner with the middle legs being run in pairs, over a longer distance and one requiring hot navigation skills. The weather was not as kind as in previous FRA relay events with low cloud and rain at the event HQ. The runners reported very challenging conditions after returning from the mountains. Despite this, all the Harriers enjoyed the day, and although not a specialist fell running club the results pleased the captain, Bryan Lomas. The only fly in the ointment was the loss of one of the electronic dibbers! The results are as follows: Men's open, 60<sup>th</sup> (out of 97 finishers); Men's Vet 40, 15<sup>th</sup> (26) and Ladies 33<sup>rd</sup> (36)

Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> October saw the Harriers out in force at Stafford Common taking part in the cross country. The ladies had a strong team led by Jo Moss back from injury. Despite the heavy rains over the last few days the course was not worse than usual. Charmaine Wood was the first Harrier home in the ladies race in 35<sup>th</sup> place. Jo Moss was cross to have lost her shoe in the mud and wasting time putting it back on. Despite this set back and a lack of training she demonstrated her abilities by taking 46<sup>th</sup> place. Polly

Kennerley was not far behind in 51<sup>st</sup> place. Other runners were: Heather Jackson, 55<sup>th</sup>; Jude Newham, 67<sup>th</sup>; Suzanne Roebuck 92<sup>nd</sup> and Lynne Roberts ( who always wins in the cake stakes) 124<sup>th</sup>. The men had a 13 strong team. Team captain Bryan Lomas went along to cheer but was unable to run because of injury. Chris Moss was first male Harrier to finish the punishing course in 69<sup>th</sup> place with Tom Brown breathing down his neck just one place behind. James Pearce and Pete Newham were within 4 places of each other in 77<sup>th</sup> and 80<sup>th</sup>. Other runners were: Pete Carvell, 106<sup>th</sup>; Chris Hewitson, 129<sup>th</sup>; Phil Dawson, 149<sup>th</sup>; Andy Eaton, 164<sup>th</sup>; Dave Cleary, 166<sup>th</sup>; Paul Bevan, 204<sup>th</sup>; Steve Burns, 227<sup>th</sup> and Harry Stubbs, 232<sup>nd</sup>. The men's team scored 488 in their event, which although was only 9th on the day, it was enough to maintain their 8th position in the league. Well done! And roll on Park Hall on 16<sup>th</sup> November!

Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> October did not have the sun shining down on the Passing Clouds race either. This is the third of the Congleton Race Series organised by Congleton Harriers. Andy Roberts took over as race director. A large number of Harriers turned out to help on the day with marshalling, registration and finishing duties. The weather was not kind but the marshals were commended on their cheery nature and encouragement. There is a full report in this edition of the Chronicle.

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