

On the last Wednesday of July, Mikko Kuronen and Ian Prime turned out for the Congleton Harriers at the 6 mile trail event at Daisy Nook Country Park. Known as the Black Knight Charge, the race is organised by East Cheshire & Tameside athletics club and alongside the two Harrier a further 104 runners lined up. Prime was 65th in a time of 51:28 to finish 8th in his age category and Kuronen was 9th beating his previous best time at this race by 27 seconds, stopping the clock at 40:20 taking first place in his age category.

On the same night Rob Parkin was running 10k in Stalybridge Country park, sounds pleasant enough but the title of the race 'Milbrook Monster' gives some indication that this wasn't a fast flat jaunt, instead it was a multi-terrain race with three stiff climbs around Harridge Pike, 212 other runners took part and Parkin crossed the line in 113th place in 56:12, no t-shirt and no medal, but a very welcome chip butty for all finishers.



Rob Parkin at Millbrook Monster 15k

picture courtesy of Harry Barclay

Three days later and Parkin was back in racing action this time with two Harriers for company, Craig Hewitt and Steve Webb joined him on another hilly adventure as they competed in the Meerbrook 15k. Hewitt was the first to finish in 1:14:36 for 104th place, Parkin was 154th in 1:19:39 and Webb was 178th in 1:22:44.



Craig Hewitt at Meerbrook 15k

picture courtesy of Bryan Dale

Last Thursday saw the final round of the 10 race summer series organised by Staffordshire Moorlands club, the race venue was Leek cricket club for a five mile run with 690ft of climb as the 137 runners ascend Gun Hill, Bryan Lomas led the way for the Harriers coming home in 9th place in 34:46, Paul Crean was next in 42:52 for 70th, Nigel Poole was 82nd in 44:29, Dave Taylor 102nd in 47:37 and Harry Stubbs who hadn't run this course before but thought it was a great route finished 118th in 50:11.



L-R Lomas, Taylor, Crean, Stubbs & Poole

At the weekend Mikko Kuronen made the trip to the west coast for the Blackpool air show 10k, a popular race attracting over 250 runners, a flat course along the upper and lower promenades, in the right conditions can offer a fast time however the coastal winds this weekend put pay to any personal bests, Kuronen picked up a prize for finishing third in his age category and came 21st overall in a time of 39:29.

Nearer to home and after an absence of a couple of years was the Leek Half Marathon, 13.1 hilly miles starting from the Leek leisure centre and around Meerbrook before the route makes its way up to the 3 Horseshoes on the A53 then a long drag up on the road below the Roaches, down to the Lazy Trout at Meerbrook, then last few miles back the way we set out before a cracking uphill finish to Brough Park. 163 runners took part with two Harriers involved, Bryan Lomas was happy enough with his 1:28:17 for 10th place overall and Emma Weston made an impressive debut for the club coming 60th in 1:48:29.



Emma Weston at Leek Half Marathon

picture courtesy of Bryan Dale

Congleton Harriers run three times a week from the leisure centre and always welcome new members for more details visit congleton-harriers.co.uk