

As 2014 draws to a close the final month has been a busy time for the club. At the beginning of December seven Harriers were to be found taking on the Tatton Yule Yomp, Knutsford. The 10K distance is mostly off road and conditions were at times unkind to the 1082 strong field enduring a passing hail shower. Oliver Reece was the first Harrier back finishing 115th in 48:33, Justin Cleary was 254th in 52:32 the other 5 finishers were, Nel Moore 399, David Frith 425, Polly Kennerley 457, Emily Heptonstall 468 and Val Fussell in 487.

The following weekend saw the fourth and final race in the North Staffs Cross Country League, organised by Staffordshire Moorlands AC the event takes place from Westwood High school in Leek and is probably the hilliest of the 4 events and with the temperature around the 2 degrees mark it can make for a challenging race. In the mens event held over 10K they had the best result in the 4 race series and pleasingly 99 points better than last year which shows the strength in depth the club now has at this discipline. The team was 13 strong and once again it was captain Bryan Lomas who the first Harrier in 26th place, Bryan Carr was ten places back and Chris Moss was 60th over the line. The other 10 places were as follows; Pete Carvell 67th, Pete Newham 77th, Craig Hewitt 78th, Dave Clarke 108th, James Pearce 110th, Graeme Burns 139th, Paul Bevan 154th, Jack Sargeant 202nd, Dave Taylor 205th, Chris Thomas 220th.

In the female event over 5k there was a similar result with Leek being the best of the four events, Charmaine Wood continued a rich vein of form which saw her finish 22nd, Jo Moss was 44th and Debbie Hill 58th the other places were Polly Wilding 76th, Felicity Doyle 91st, Lucy Rusbridge 94th.

Whilst the overall positions were not available at time of writing there is expectation that Bryan Lomas will have finished 3rd overall male in his age category (MV45) the events have been well attended and enjoyed enormously and now the club look forward to the new year and the challenge of the Cheshire Championships.

The following day Bryan was back in action taking on 1,181ft of ascent and 7.6 miles of mud, slippery limestone rocks and deep water in the Litton Christmas Cracker fell race, in his 54th event of 2014 and 2nd race in two days there was no sign of fatigue as he placed 22nd in the 166 strong field. It was the first running of the event organised by the Tideswell Running Club and definitely one to return to next year.

The final Sunday before Christmas saw three of our female Harriers take on the Roaches in the 8 mile Christmas Cracker event starting from Tittesworth Reservoir, there was a plethora of fancy dress on display and a party atmosphere amongst the 265 strong field, with two miles of the course along the exposed ridge at 1,500ft it's not a race for the feint hearted but all three returned unscathed and ready for the festive break, Felicity Doyle was 170th and Polly Kennerley and Sara Stead came home together in 186th and 187th respectively and all finished in under an hour and a half.

For more information about Congleton Harriers visit www.congleton-harriers.co.uk