

## Congleton Harriers Race Reports.

A full report of the staging of Congleton Half Marathon has already appeared in the pages on the Chronicle but due to holidays it has not been possible to provide details of the Congleton Harriers taking part. Eleven members completed the half marathon with a further three members completing the quarter marathon. A large number of club members were unable to run as they were acting as marshals, timekeepers and various other jobs. Without the willing support of club members it would be difficult to stage this event.

Bryan Lomas, who has recently returned to racing, continued his fine form achieving 9<sup>th</sup> place in a very competitive field with a time of 1.18.47. James Pearce was next in with a time of 1.22.37 (22) followed by Pete Newham 1.23.18 (24), Alex McCormick 1.28.19 (52), Chris Moss 1.29.20 (61), Rob Parkin 1.41.30 (159), Rich Benson 1.42.38 (175) and David Forster 1.49.50 (189). Melanie Van Oss was the 1<sup>st</sup> Lady Harrier to complete the difficult course in an excellent time of 1.49.50 with Anna Reeves just behind, 1.51.44 (275). The evergreen Margaret Fox was 1<sup>st</sup> FV70 in a magnificent time of 2.13.47, a new course record for her age group.

In the quarter marathon Joanne Moss ran a great race to finish 2<sup>nd</sup> Lady and 1<sup>st</sup> FV35 with a time of 54.35 (22) followed by Ella Lyman 58.15 (32) and winning FV40 group. Helen Burt made a welcome return to racing with a fine time of 63.24 (49).

The day before the Half Marathon saw the start of the North Staffs Cross-Country League and a number of our runners competed in both races over that weekend. The initial race in the series of four took place at Lyme Valley Newcastle. The course was mainly flat but with two steep hills towards the end of the circuit. The men's race was run over three laps for a distance of approx. 10k with the women competing over a short lap followed by a full lap with a distance of 5K (the ladies had to negotiate the hills twice!)

In the men's race the first six finishers from each club score and the team with the lowest total wins, the scores are cumulative over the four races. Every placing counts which results in very competitive races with runners trying their hardest to catch the runner in front and thus gain the points advantage. James Pearce was 1<sup>st</sup> Harrier to complete the course in a time of 37.28 (21) with Brian Carr 37.37 (23) close behind. Pete Newham was next to finish with a time of 37.57 (24) followed by Simon Jackson 38.01 (26). James Wood 38.40 (34), Chris Goodwin 39.56 (49) and Andy Roberts 41.14 (63). Chris Tanner- Tremaine, flying the flag for the over 60's, was next to finish in 48.25 (126) closely followed by Pete Doyle 48.37 (128), Derek Lucas 50.24 (141) and Harold Pinkney 51.06 (145).

The ladies race was clouded in controversy when Harrier Claire Thompson was sent the wrong way by a marshal at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> lap thus unwittingly gaining an advantage of a few yards. Thompson was well in the lead at the time

and increased her lead over the second lap but, because she had taken the incorrect route, she was initially disqualified. Common sense prevailed and in the end she was awarded joint first place with a time of 19.21. Gill Armstrong again proved what a strong competitor she is over the country with a fine time of 23.22 (22) followed by Debbie Hill 23.43 (25) Judith Newham 25.14 (47), Bev Griffiths 26.59 (65) Felicity Doyle 27.06 (68) and Caroline Partner 30.11 (85). There were 98 finishers.

The following Saturday the races were held at Park Hall Country Park Cheadle over the same distance of 10k (men) and 5k (women). The undulating course was a real test of stamina and was run in ideal conditions.

Once again James Pearce led the men's team home with a time of 37.37 (29) followed by Bryan Carr 37.56 (31), James Wood 37.59 (32), Pete Newham 38.05 (33), Simon Jackson 38.06 (34) and Bryan Lomas 38.08 (35). These consecutive Harriers must have had the timekeepers wondering what was happening! Just behind this pack was Steve Bacon in a time of 38.56 (39) followed by Andy Roberts 40.45 (60), Chris Moss 41.06 (66), Chris Tanner-Tremaine 47.29 (138), Grant Silk 50.08 (157), Harold Pinkney 50.36 (160) and Dave Taylor 51.21 (167).

In the Ladies race Gill Armstrong led her team home in a fine 18<sup>th</sup> position with a time of 23.07. Debbie Hill was next to finish in 24.01 (29), followed home by Judith Newham 26.02 (56), Judith Ceuppens 26.38 (61), Bev Griffiths 28.12 (76), Ella Lyman 28.35 (78) and Caroline Partner 31.00 (88) with 98 finishers.

After two races the men's team lie third in Division One and the ladies team fifth, also in Division One. In addition Debbie Hill is leading the FV45 section.

The next race is at Stafford Common on 10<sup>th</sup> November. Hopefully we can build on the excellent turnout we have been seeing so far. We need as many runners as possible, not necessarily to score but to push back the scoring runners in the other teams.

**Advance Notice.** The Harriers Christmas Party will be held Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> December at The Swettenham Arms. Please book your tickets early. See Paula for details or club notice board.