

Sunday saw the Congleton Harriers holding one of their three annual races: the Passing Clouds Fell Race. This 9.8mile fell race featuring 1833' of ascent starts and finishes at the Tittesworth Reservoir near Leek. The demanding course takes in both Ramshaw Rocks, the Roaches with a final ascent and descent of the iconic Hen Cloud.

Running was made much more challenging by the hot, sunny weather; probably the hottest conditions that the race has ever been run in. That at least made it an easy decision for the race director to relax the usual fell running rule for runners to carry bad weather waterproofs, hat and gloves! Many runners worried about the hot conditions enquired pre-race about water stations on route (there are two – one at the halfway point at Roach end and one at the finish - and the marshals made sure there was plenty of water on offer at each).

There was representation from all over with runners travelling from the East Midlands, Lancashire, Yorkshire, Liverpool, Tring and a large contingent from Matlock AC who had included the race on their summer competition list. There was also plenty of local representation with runners from Boalloy, Mow Cop, South Cheshire, Cheshire Hill runners, Staffs Moorlands, Macc Harriers, Stockport Harriers and one from Congleton Harriers in action. 122 runners entered the race and all bar 3, who pulled up with minor injuries, made it home.



Jack Ross

Photo Stephen Lee

The men's race was won by Jack Ross from Staffordshire Moorlands AC in 70:40, followed by Zac Hodgkinson from Matlock AC in a time of 72:13 and Robbie Peal from Macclesfield Harriers was the third runner home in 74:41. The women's race was won by Lucy Butt, who came in 27th overall, in a time of 89:05 followed very closely by Gillian Lindsey from

Macclesfield Harriers in 90:23 and Danielle Brearton from Wigan Harriers in 91:27. Macclesfield Harriers also made a clean sweep of the men's and women's team prizes. Emma Weston, the sole Congleton Harrier in action, finished in 49th place in 96:51. This year the race was blessed with the participation of Bill Allsop from Buxton AC who was running in the MV75 category and finished 111th; surely an inspiration to all.

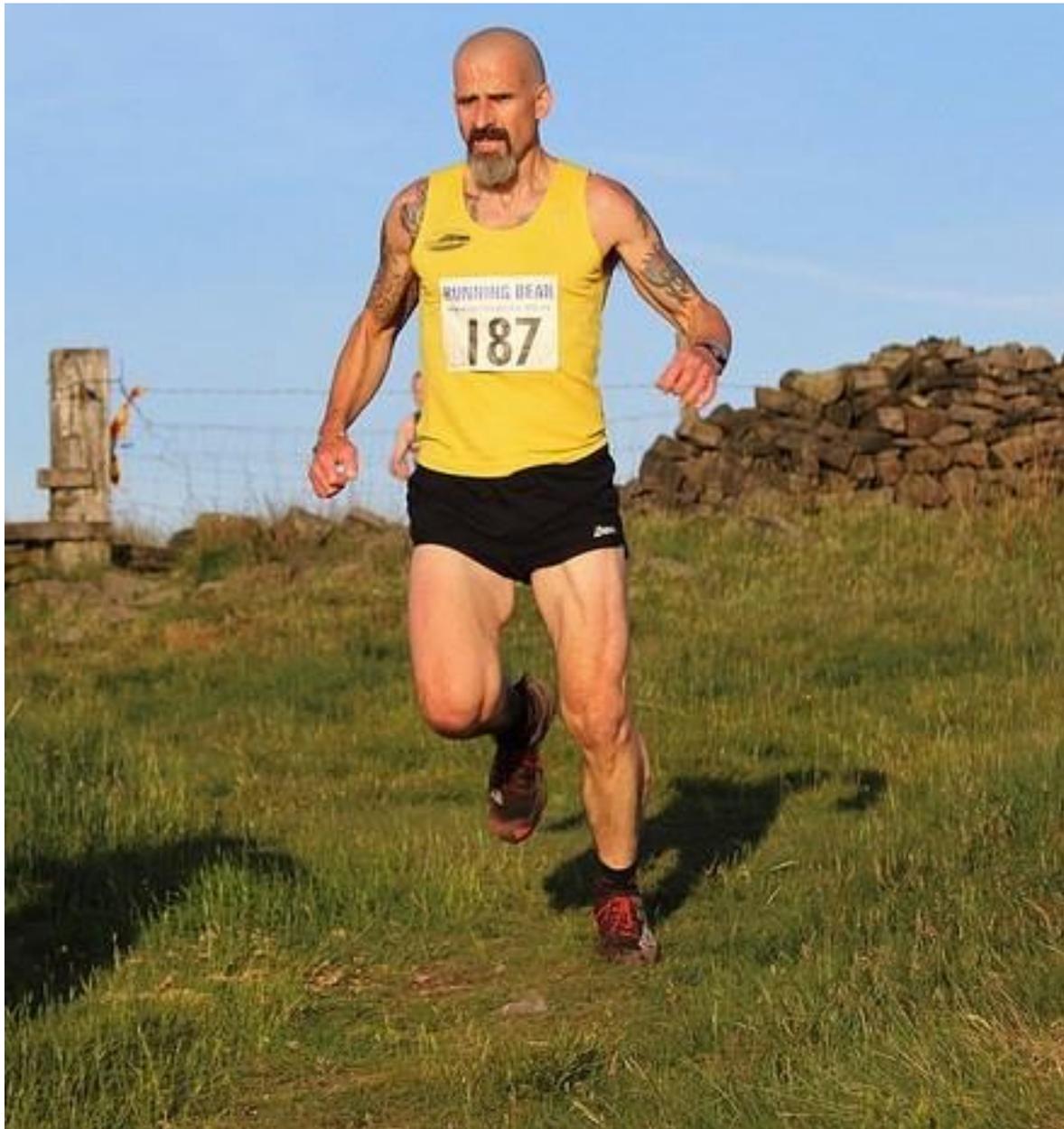
This year the Congleton Harriers are donating a proportion of the race proceeds to the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust who invest a great deal of time, money and effort to protect the Roaches from footfall erosion.

The Harriers is only able to hold the race due to the help from a large number of volunteers who act as start/finish and course marshals - so special thanks to all those who gave up their time to help. As ever, many of the competitors commented on the quality of the race and on how well the event is marshalled with many of the first-time runners vowing to return again. Thanks also to all the staff at the Tittesworth Reservoir Visitor Centre who went out of their way to help on the day and finally to Running Bear who kindly sponsored the race.

The fell race wasn't the only race taking place on Sunday and there were three Harriers in action on the road at the "Potters Arf". This road race follows a testing undulating course with a steep climb of "Heartbreak Hill" at 12 miles which was made no easier by the heat. The race was fantastically supported all the way round. Disregarding the heat, the winner of the race broke the course record in an amazing 1:06! Jo Moss, was also pleased with her run despite the heat, was first Harrier home in 182nd place out of the 1162 runners finishing in a time of 1:40:06. Mike Stanley was also pleased with his performance, beating his time from last year, finishing 314th in 1:46:57. Andrew Bell was the final Harrier home crossing the line in 496th place in 1:55:29.

Working backwards from Sunday, there are two more races to report on: the Staffs Moorlands AC Summer Series race on Thursday - a 4.5 mile run round Tittesworth Reservoir and the Boar's Head Fell Race on Wednesday run from Poynton with much of the race in and around Lyme Park; an 8.1m race featuring 1312' of ascent across a mixture of rough tracks and open fields.

Bryan Lomas and Dave Clark were the two Harriers in action at Boars Head. Bryan came 30th out of the 189 runners finishing in 55:06 and Dave came in 44th in 57:31.



Bryan Lomas

Photo: B. Lomas

Anthony Allan was the first Harrier home at Tittesworth finishing 38th out of 266 in a time of 32:19. Charmaine Wood was second Harrier home 54th in 33:40, followed by James Yates, 68th in 34:29; Alice Nimmo 91st in 36:00, Lucy Rusbridge 96th in 36:21; Polly Kennerley 114th in 37:13, Helen Jeffery in 37:13, Louise Poole 163rd in 41:04, Debbie Hill 164th (also 2nd in F55 category) in 41:06; Ali McNinch 234th in 47:05; Jack McNinch 235th also in 47:05



Harriers at Tittesworth SMAC Summer Series

Photo Alice Nimmo

Congleton Harriers run three times a week from the leisure centre on Monday, Tuesdays and Thursdays and always welcomes new members. Full details are on the Congleton Harriers website: Congleton-harriers.co.uk.