

This Saturday, 5<sup>th</sup> January, saw the running of the Cheshire Cross Country championships at Birchwood Park near Warrington. This was a venue used two years ago, and for the competitors who took part back in 2017 there were memories of a glutinous, muddy swamp following prolonged, heavy rain. Thankfully, this year the much drier conditions made for a much more enjoyable race following a looping, gently undulating course that switched between running across open fields to narrow trails through the trees. The Harriers were out in numbers with a full men's team and two Women's teams. Also in attendance was Alice Nimmo who had kindly volunteered to marshal on the day and was on hand to provide much needed encouragement to the teams as they progressed round.



*Congleton Harriers after the Cheshire Cross Country*

*Photo: Bryan Lomas*

Confidence was high in the women's teams on the back of their recent successes in the North Staffs League and they didn't disappoint. The women's event was four laps around the course creating a run of around 5 miles. Emma Taylor was the first Harrier to finish out of the 90 competitors, crossing the finish line 15<sup>th</sup> in 36:18. She was followed by Emma Weston, 18<sup>th</sup> in 36:54, Jo Moss, 25<sup>th</sup> in 38:04, Carol Bird, 26<sup>th</sup> in 38:06, Mel Worthington, 43<sup>rd</sup> in 40:34 and Polly Kennerley, 53<sup>rd</sup> in 42:36. The "A" Team narrowly missed out on a top three finish, coming 4<sup>th</sup> out of the 21 teams competing and the "B" Team finished 13<sup>th</sup>. There were prizes, however, for both Emma Weston and Carol Bird who both finished first in their respective age categories and to the Vets team who finished 2<sup>nd</sup> out of the 14 teams competing. Emma Taylor also picked up a "Cheshire Letter" for coming 15<sup>th</sup> which means she is on the radar for selection to represent the county.



Carol Bird, Mel Worthington, Jo Moss, Polly Kennerley, Emma Weston, Emma Taylor

Photo: Nick Budd

For the men, it was five laps of the course representing a run of around 6 miles. Having seven runners in attendance was a step up from last year as it meant the Harriers were able to register a team result and, despite finishing 14<sup>th</sup>, there were some strong runs with everyone giving it their all. This was enough to see the Vets team finish 15<sup>th</sup> out of the 19 Vets teams in action. Anthony Allen finished 27<sup>th</sup> out of the 157 competitors in 40:19, followed by Bryan Lomas, 56<sup>th</sup> in 42:56, Chris Moss, 77<sup>th</sup> in 44:44, Stuart Rider, 83<sup>rd</sup> 45:06, Nick Budd, 135<sup>th</sup> in 51:12, Jack Sargeant, 139<sup>th</sup> in 52:09 and Paul Crean, 148<sup>th</sup> in 54:41.

Finally, a bit of advance news for 2019: entry is now open for the 36<sup>th</sup> outing of Congleton half marathon which will take place on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> October. This popular, well marshalled event follows an undulating, scenic and rural course. As usual, all profits from the race are donated to charity. Normal entry includes a souvenir technical t-shirt and commemorative medal. New for 2019, however, for those runners who simply want to run without receiving any souvenirs, there is now is the “No Bear Frylls option” although early entry for this option is advised due to limited availability. To enter click on the link on the club’s website ([Congleton-harriers.co.uk](http://Congleton-harriers.co.uk)).

The club welcomes new members with club training runs on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday. If you are thinking of joining but are unsure of your pace and ability to keep up, then consider the Monday run which are now being tailored to accommodate new prospective members. You can find full details on our Congleton Harriers website: [Congleton-harriers.co.uk](http://Congleton-harriers.co.uk). You can also connect with the club on Facebook where details of club activities are posted regularly.