

One result to catch up on from the previous week for the Congleton Harriers. Rob Parkin took part in the "Hit The Trail" race at Reddish Vale (Stockport) organised by Belle Vue Racers on Sunday 6th January. The race was just under 5 miles of trail and woodland, and Rob's time of 42.35 placed him 217th of the 384 finishers.

This Saturday morning saw the running of the club's annual Winter Cloud Handicap Race. The race, which starts from the leisure centre, proceeds up along part of the Biddulph Way before veering off onto footpaths all the way up to the top of the Cloud and then back down. This is an internal club race where the faster runners, based upon recent form, are given a time penalty to even up the race. If the form guide is correct, it should create a race whereby all the racers finish at around the same time and this year it didn't disappoint with all those competing finishing within 5 minutes of each other. The race winner was Paul Steel who had a finish time of 66:00 (actual run time was time 57:00 having started with a 9 minute delay). Second was Mark Tilstone in 66:36 (actual time 60:36, 6 minute delay) followed by Emma Weston in 67:03 (actual time 56:03, 11 minute delay); Sarah-Louise Proudmore in 67:29 (actual time 64:29, 3 minute delay); Anthony Allen 68:03 (actual time 47:03, 21 minute delay); Roy Cochran-Patel in 68:17 (actual time 62:17, 6 minute delay); James Yates, 68:35 (actual time 57:35, 11 minute delay); Mike Stanley 68:57 (actual time 64:57, 4 minute delay); Jack Sargeant in 69:04 (actual time 64:04, 4 minute delay); Helen Jeffery in 69:34 (actual time 63:28, 6 minute delay); Susan Blake in 69:34 (no delay); Chris Moss 70:18 (actual time 53:18, 17 minute delay); Duncan Young in 70:30 (no delay) and Stuart Rider in 71:15 (actual time 54:15, 17 minute delay).

There were also two impressive results from the fastest man and fastest woman on the day as they both set new course records for the winter version of this race: Antony Allan set a new overall course record and Emma Weston set a new Ladies course record.

Also on Saturday Bryan Lomas and Lucy Rusbridge travelled over to Heaton Park in pursuit of extra cross-country action, taking part in Match 4 of the Manchester Area Cross Country League. The race is a 3-lap course consisting of open fields, narrow woodland tracks and a good uphill at the end of each lap creating a 8.5k event for the senior ladies and 9.8k event for the senior men. The conditions were cool but not too muddy underfoot for the competitors; Lucy finished 115th out of the 312 runners (16th out of 49 in the L45 category) with a time of 42.58 and Bryan finished 174th out of 466 runners (17th out of 67 in the M45 category) in a time of 41.04.



Bryan Lomas

Photo: Bryan Lomas



Lucy Rusbridge: Photo B Lomas 1



Heaton Park Cross Country Start

Photo: B Lomas

On Sunday Rob Parkin was back in action, making a weekend visit to York to participate in the Brass Monkey Half Marathon. This popular race (it sells out in around 30 minutes of on-line entry opening) is run across a very flat route making it a good event for runners looking for a personal best. This year, however, it's exposed nature on a very windy day put paid to most of those ambitions. For Rob, this was his first half in almost three years, having battled back from a couple of long-term injuries, so he was extremely pleased with his time of 1:54:22 finishing 1039th out of the 1554 finishers (168th out of 202 in the V45 category).



Rob Parkin at the Brass Monkey

Photo: Rob Parkin

Finally, there was also another social run this Sunday around Three Shires Head, this time led by Helen Jeffery. There was a good turn out with 13 runners setting out from Clough House, including Tony Hulme of Running Bear fame who kept the group company up until it reached Three Shires. Whilst temperatures were somewhat mild for the time of year, other conditions made it a tad challenging; driving winds, low mist and a lot of water underfoot, turning the paths into streams. That didn't seem to deter anyone, and most opted to complete the "easy" up-and-over final hill suggested by Helen rather than the gentle run back down the road. Let's just say it was a good way to finish off the legs! Many of the group took that as catalyst to spend an hour or so drying out at Blaze Farm on the way back to Congleton

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. You can also connect with the club on Facebook where details of club activities are posted regularly.