

It was an extremely busy weekend of racing for the Congleton Harriers starting on Saturday with a bit of county cross country followed on Sunday by a trio of road races (a 20-mile run-out at Knighton and two shorter 10k runs at Chester and Tatton) and a solitary fell race. For three of the club competing it was their first time out as a Congleton Harrier. Despite the challenging wet, cold and blustery conditions there were some impressive results which included new course records, age category wins and several new personal bests, so all in all, a successful weekend for the Harriers.

First up the cross country: congratulations go to Emma Taylor, who based upon her results in the pre-Christmas league races, had the honour of representing her county. Taylor was one in a team of six competing for Cheshire down in Loughborough in the CAU Inter County Championships and she finished 198th in a highly competitive field of 266 runners in a time of 47:22.



Emma Taylor representing Cheshire

Photo: J Moss

The standout performance of the weekend was at the Knighton 20 where Carol Bird, despite the strong winds, had an outstanding race to finish 66th out of the 270 runners taking 1st place in the F55 age category. Her time of 2:29:59 establishes a new course record for the age category in the race. It's also worth noting that her time is only just outside the all-time top five V55 times for the distance in the country.

In the same race it was a first outing as a Congleton Harrier for Jody Brooks who finished in 190th place in a time of 3:12:49.



Carol Bird and Jody Brooks

Photo Alice Nimmo

In the 10k race at Chester, it was also a first outing for Dan Gibbs as a Congleton Harrier and what an impressive start it was with Gibbs the first Harrier to complete the course finishing 45th out of 3,979 runners in a time of 36:17. This was also a new personal best time for Gibbs. Not far behind was John Carbutt, 61st in 37:07 which was also a new personal best taking over a minute off his previous time. Then came Emma Taylor, in her second competitive race of the weekend, finishing 139th in 40:21 (just missing out on a top three age category finish), Jo Moss 165th (who did bag 2nd place in the F45 age category) in 41:23, Emma Weston 202nd in 42:24 and Mel Worthington in 44:15.



Dan Gibbs

Photo D Gibbs

The final new Harrier competing for the first time in the yellow Congleton vest was Gemma Brinkhurst who was one of 625 runners at the Tatton 10k. Brinkhurst completed the course in 56:53 to finish 260th.

Out on the fells the solitary runner was Bryan Lomas who made the journey over to Glossop to compete in the James Thorn fell race. Five miles with 1611' of ascent out from the Royal Oak to the summit of James Thorn and back. The cold weather made for challenging snowy conditions with poor visibility and a reduced field of 45 runners suggests that some runners opted to remain in warm beds rather than brave the elements. Lomas finished 11th overall and 3rd M45 in a time of 42:25.

As you can see from the above report, the club is always keen to welcome new members whether you are a speedy racer or more of a social runner. So, if you are

thinking of thinking of joining then just come along to one of the regular club runs for a few weeks and try us out for size; you will be made to feel more than welcome with no obligation to join. 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.

Alternatively, come along to the Congleton Park Run on Saturday morning as there are always a good number of Harriers in attendance who are more than happy to chat. On the first Saturday of the month we are even easier to spot as there are always 5 or 6 of us pacing in our yellow running vests.