

The back half of October saw races two and three of the North Staff Cross Country League come around in quick succession with Congleton Harriers fielding men's and women's teams in both senior races.

The first event required a trek down to Staffordshire Common on 16<sup>th</sup> October. Traditionally, this is a very wet and boggy course, but the fine weather conditions meant it was unusually dry. The Men's team went into the race sitting second in Division 2 closely jostling for the lead with two other teams. Unfortunately, due to illness and availability in the first race the women's team were out of contention for placement in Division 1 but were keen to field a full team for the remaining races.

The women went off first around a 5k route and put in some strong performances. Charmaine Wood was the first Harrier home crossing the finish line 27<sup>th</sup> out of the 153 runners in 22.40. She was followed by Jo Moss, 41<sup>st</sup> in 23.18, Polly Kennerley 64<sup>th</sup> in 25.08, Gill Armstrong 74<sup>th</sup> in 25.46 and Georgie Budd, 79<sup>th</sup> in 26.12.

The men's race followed shortly after over an 8k route. The men also fielded a team of 5 runners and Anthony Allen came in 25<sup>th</sup> out of the 166 runners in 28.14 followed by Bryan Lomas, 35<sup>th</sup> in 29.07, Stuart Rider 55<sup>th</sup> in 30.18, Chris Moss 66<sup>th</sup> in 31.01 with Nick Budd, who was struggling with illness bringing up the rear, finishing 161<sup>st</sup> in 40.48. The top 4 runners count in Division 2 so the performance was enough to comfortably maintain second place in the division.

The second race, on 30<sup>th</sup> October, was closer to home at the popular, but difficult to park at, Park Hall Country Park just outside Stoke. Again the weather was kind to the runners with a break in all the rain and a reasonably warm temperature.

For the women's race the Harriers mustered the same team from Stafford Common to run the hilly 5k route and their performances were pretty much in line with their performance at Stafford. Charmaine Wood was again the first Harrier home crossing the finish line 25<sup>th</sup> out of the 136 runners in 25.56. She was followed by Jo Moss, 32<sup>nd</sup> in 26.36, Gill Armstrong 61<sup>st</sup> in 29.11, Polly Kennerley 73<sup>rd</sup> in 29.51, and Georgie Budd, 75<sup>th</sup> in 30.1.

The men were able to field a larger contingent with nine Harriers lining up within the 194 runners who completed the 5.2 mile course. Tom Fellbaum came in 10<sup>th</sup> overall in 24.56 followed by Anthony Allen, 31<sup>st</sup> in 26.59, Tom Walker, 34<sup>th</sup> in 27.12, Bryan Lomas, 36<sup>th</sup> in 27.16, Stuart Rider 57<sup>th</sup> in 28.13, Chris Moss 78<sup>th</sup> in 29.47, Adam Powell 92<sup>nd</sup> in 30.35, Nick Budd 173<sup>rd</sup> in 37.06 and Stephen Canning 174<sup>th</sup> in 37.14. Despite a strong run by all the team, they finished 3 points behind the current Division 2 leaders. However, it was more than enough to comfortably consolidate their hold on 2<sup>nd</sup> place and if they can replicate their performance in the last race in December, they are well placed for promotion to Division 1.

Sandwiched between these two cross country events six Harriers participated in the Knutsford 10k on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> October. Out of the 2087 who ran Hannah Harding was first Harrier back in 242<sup>nd</sup> position in 45.16 (also finishing 2<sup>nd</sup> in the F35 category). Danny Jackson was next finishing 441<sup>st</sup> in 49.57 followed by Jackie Moss, 739<sup>th</sup> in 55.23, Martin Wood, 789<sup>th</sup> in 56.38, Tim Harden, 920<sup>th</sup> in 59.39 and Elaine Statham 953<sup>rd</sup> in 1.00.25 which was enough to take 1<sup>st</sup> place in the F75 category.

The final run of the month was a memorial run on Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> October. This was in memory of a former Harrier, Ian Ithutia, who sadly died earlier this year. Ian was a popular member of the club and there was a large turnout of runners who came to take part in a wet but fun 7 mile off-road run over a new route in honour of his memory, raise some funds for a charity donation and enjoy some coffee and cake after at the tennis club.



Memorial Run

Photo: Louise Poole

As it is the first weekend of a new month this Saturday, Congleton Harriers will be pacing at the Congleton Park Run at Astbury Mere. There will be pacers running at 22, 25, 28, 31 and 34 times helping give a little bit of motivation to the runners around them so come along if you want a bit of help.

The Harriers have club runs on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday all setting off from outside the tennis club. The club is always keen to see new members whether you are a speedy racer or more of a social runner. So, if you are 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](http://Congleton-harriers.co.uk). You can also connect with the club on Facebook where details of club activities are posted regularly.