

Number 7

Rob Parkin was the sole Congleton Harrier to take part in the Newcastle 10K which was held on 30th March. This was only the second time that the event had been run as a 10km race but its predecessor, the Newcastle 7, had taken place for the previous 40 years. This had been a longer race at 7 miles but the newer shorter course is safer for competitors. The race starts from Newcastle College and takes in the tough uphill of Black Bank before a downhill to Silverdale. The finishing straight is fast along the old railway line. Parkin was pleased to finish in the top half of the field (155/396) in 46:33

Bryan Lomas rued the day he decided to be sensible and look after his recovering twisted ankle. Rather than taking part in the Mow Cop Fell Race he chose to stay on road and challenge himself with the Sheffield Half Marathon. This was an event that Lomas has done before so he was out to compete hard, on what is a reasonably flat course, to improve on previous times and rankings. Unfortunately, the event proved a disaster with the organizers having problems with the water supply. The 9.00am start was put back, with competitors shivering on the start line for nearly an hour before the unclear announcement that the event was being cancelled was made. Lomas, along with thousands of others, started running and completed the course. Spectators provided water to supplement what was available at the water stations. Lomas was disappointed in his chip time of 1:25 but admits that this was not an ordinary race. However it is one he is unlikely to be trekking across to do next year.

Meanwhile seven Harriers stayed closer to home and tackled the Mow Cop Fell Race. This is 6.5 miles long with 1200 feet of climb. In total 106 runners took part with Andy Roberts doing extremely well, coming in 15th place in 54:01. Charmaine Wood was the first female Harrier to finish with a good time of 1:05:49 (65th). Debbie Hill was only 2 places behind in 1:06:16. Dave Taylor had a good race with a time of 1:08:35 and just pipped Heather Jackson to the post by one second. Harry Stubbs was disappointed with his time of 1:17:12. Helen Jeffery completed in 1:28:21

Sunday was a busy day for Harriers as four also took part in the Greater Manchester Marathon from Trafford. Nearly 6000 runners took part and a course record was set at 2:16:58. Chris Smith had a blistering run and completed in 3:17:52 in 641st place, within the top 11 per cent of the runners. Chris Hewitson was just over 10 minutes behind Smith in 3:28:39 and a third Chris in the shape of Chris Moss crossed the line in 3:31:45. Steve Burns was pleased to come in under four and a quarter hours in 4:14:34 which earned him a place in the top third of the field.

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