

Congleton Harriers Race Reports.

The Harriers recently celebrated their 25th Anniversary. Tony Squires founded the club in 1982 when he placed an advert on the Congleton Chronicle asking if there were any runners in Congleton who would be interested in forming a club. As the saying goes "from small acorns mighty oaks grow" and so it has been for the Harriers. From an initial membership of just 4 the club has prospered over the years and now boasts a membership of well over 100, with over 40% of membership being female. The club caters for all standards and welcomes runners of all abilities; all we want is for the members to enjoy their running. To celebrate this landmark anniversary a buffet dance was held at the Park Pavilion and 56 members and partners attended. Guests were welcomed with a glass of champagne and assorted canapés as they arrived.

The former chairman, Derek Lucas and current chairman, Pete Doyle made speeches, when the history of the club was recounted for the members. A disco followed an excellent meal. Thanks are extended to the staff of the Pavilion Restaurant for their excellent service and to Paula Kennerley, the club treasurer and social secretary, for organising the event.

Over recent weeks members have been busy on the racing front. The fifth race in the Staffs. Moorlands AC Summer series took place at Buxton over a demanding two lap course. The course itself had to be changed at the last minute due to flooding and the race was run in very wet conditions underfoot. Simon Harding was 1st Harrier finishing in 8th place in a time of 34.27. Pete Newham was next home in 35.11 (11) and beating his old rival James Pearce 35.27 (13) for the first time. Clare Thompson was 2nd lady, beaten by international fell runner Jackie Lee (but was 1st FV35) in a time of 37.21 and achieving an overall position of 25th. Pete Ceuppens, fast returning to form after a long lay off through injury, ran well to finish the race in 42.48 (64) followed by Mick Fernyhough 42.49 (65) and Ben Glimmerveen 44.07 (77).

The battle in the LV45 section continues with Sandre Jackson taking the honours this time, finishing 2nd LV45 in a time of 44.14 (79) just edging out rival Debbie Hill 44.20 (86). Gill Armstrong continues to push for honours in the LV35 section finishing in 86th place with a time of 44.38 closely followed by Malcolm Jackson 44.49 (89), Seaton Kennerley 45.03 (90), Rich Benson 45.21 (96), Judith Newham 46.29 (103), Chris Tanner-Tremaine 46.52 (105), Harry Stubbs 47.05 (107) and Harold Pinkney 47.45 (112).

Ella Lyman ran a fine race to finish in 142nd place with a time of 52.08 just in front of Derek Lucas, 52.19 (143) with Judith Ceuppens 53.46 (151), Felicity Doyle 54.30 (153) and Caroline Partner 62.30 (169) close behind. There were 174 finishers)

In addition to the Summer Series members have also been running other races during this period. On 1st July four members travelled to Stone to take part in the St Michael's 10k with Rich Benson leading the quartet home in a time of 44.48 (126) closely followed by Pete Doyle 44.52 (128). Harold Pinkney was next to finish in 49.34 (209) just in front of the fast improving Felicity Doyle 49.46 (214)

Rich Benson is working on the old adage “have shoes will travel” when he took part in the Cheadle 4 race in Staffordshire. This is a difficult course with the first two miles being steeply up bank and the rest of the race being a thigh shuddering descent. Benson completed the race in 28.16 followed by the club’s only other representative, Caroline Partner, who achieved a time of 37.41.

Whilst visiting relatives in Canada Matt Plummer took part in the Calgary Marathon and was pleased with his time of 4.24.18 being placed 462nd in a field of 750 finishers.

After a weeks break the 6th race in the Summer Series was run last Thursday at Biddulph Country Park. Like the Buxton race the course had to be amended due to the conditions underfoot. This race comprises three laps of the hilly country park and is a real test of stamina. The normal order resumed with James Pearce beating Pete Newham in a close finish with Pearce clocking a time of 29.49 (5th) against Newham’s 30.43 (7). Clare Thompson ran a brilliant race to finish in 31.32, and was 1st Lady and also finished in overall 10th position. It is believed that this is the 1st time that a lady has achieved a top ten position in the history of the race series.

Andy Roberts ran well to finish in 14th place in a time of 32.05 followed by Jason Chappell 33.34 (23) and new member Alex McCormick in his first race in club colours 34.06 (27). The gold vests of the Harriers were now crossing the finishing line thick and fast with Chris Rhodes 36.49 (55) followed by Seaton Kennerley 36.58 (57) Rich Benson 37.15 (59th and 2nd V55), Gill Armstrong 37.44 (65th and 2nd FV.35) and Sandre Jackson 37.45 (66th and 1st LV.45). Husband Malcolm was just behind in 71st place with a time of 37.57 followed by Dave Taylor 39.27 (85), Jim Bradbury 39.37 (87), Judith Newham 39.44 (89th and 3rd LV35).

Chris Tanner-Tremaine led the cavalry charge of more Harriers with a time of 39.57 (90) closely followed by Derek Dale 40.03 (92), Tony Smith 40.50 (97), Liz Reeves 41.16 (101), Austin Farr 41.55 (104), Harold Pinkney 41.57 (105), Paula Kennerley 43.24 (111), Anna Reeves 44.03 (117), Len Frodsham 47.53 (131), Caroline Partner 50.36 (137) and Simon Wadsworth 51.20 (139). There were 147 finishers.

In the junior fun run Caolin Orchard finished 2nd, though there is some doubt here as he was originally awarded 1st place but it appears he was given the wrong race finishing ticket. Josh Carr ran well to finish in 13th place followed by Rosie Pearce (19), Ella Kennerley (21) and Joseph Pearce (22).

The remaining races in the summer series are Oakamoor Hilly (26th July), Birchall (2nd Aug), Parkhall (9th Aug) and Leek rugby Club (16th Aug). A number of Harriers are close to winning prizes in various categories so members who cannot run are welcome to come along to encourage their colleagues!