

Recent Press Reports
By 'Scoop' Duffield

The theory goes that if you have an infinite number of monkeys, sat randomly hitting typewriter keys for an infinite amount of time, they would eventually produce the complete works of Shakespeare. However, if you just have one monkey... with only Monday lunchtime to hit the typewriter keys...oh dear. The monkey can be contacted at claire.colin@virgin.net or 01422 846593

BTW, no I really don't do the headlines, but I think perhaps Phil really is 61.

Fellsman (Press Date 24/05/07)

Phil Going Strong at 61

Todmorden Harriers' 'Ultra Machine' Phil Hodgson continued his recent string of successes at the weekend when he took home the 'Commissioners Tankard' at the 61 mile 'Fellsman' event.

The tankard is awarded for the first veteran 50 to complete the extremely arduous tour of the Yorkshire Dales, which includes ascents of Dales landmark peaks of Ingleborough, Whernside, Fleet Moss and Buckden Pike.

In squally conditions, Phil finished the route in 14 hours and 21 minutes, three hours behind winner and ultra running giant, Mark Hartell of Macclesfield Harriers.

Other Harriers in attendance included John Preston who, who ran well to complete in a little over 17 hours, and John Page who finished in 23 hours and 30 minutes.

Jura (Press Date 30/05/07)

The Isle of Wright

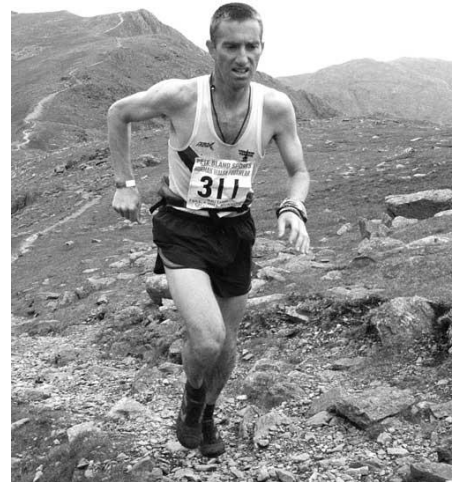
Todmorden Harrier Jon Wright continued his recent blistering form in the toughest of fell races last weekend when he narrowly missed out on a famous victory at the fearsome Isle of Jura Race, eventually finishing third, behind two of the country's top stars. Wright's time of three hours, three minutes and twenty five seconds brought him home just twenty seconds adrift of the winner, fell running colossus Ian Holmes who just pipped second place man Lloyd Taggart by the width of a shirt.

The race is probably the most savage of all British fell races, visiting seven mountain summits in its 16 miles, and traversing a genuinely remote wilderness area, the like of which can't really be found in England. A mark of its severity is that the organisers insist that any aspirant contenders have completed some other remote and difficult races before considering entering, not that this inhibits entry numbers, the race filled up quickly this year and attracted the best and toughest fell runners from both England and Scotland.

Other Todmorden runners included Jane Smith, a Jura veteran who completed in five hours and twenty eight minutes, bringing her home in 7th place in the ladies' rankings, and Rhys Watkins who, as a newcomer to the race, finished in a creditable 82nd place after finishing in five hours and nine minutes.

Other Todmorden results for the Isle of Jura Race:

35, Phil Hodgson (4.29.51); 103, Andrew Bibby (5.32.41); 107, Richard Leonard (5.41.15); 127, Rachel Skinner (6.43.03); 139, Stuart Boulton (7.24.39); 147, Chris Preston (7.51.00); 148, John Preston (7.51.00).



Meanwhile last weekend, Chris Smale, who was one of last year's ubiquitous runners on the local fell scene was making amends for his early season absence with a brace of good performances which see him going some way towards capturing his 2006 form.

Firstly, he was in action in his familiar arena of the fells, finishing 5th in a top drawer field at the Kildwick Fell Race near Skipton which was held mid week. Then last Sunday he followed this up with 19th place amongst the 280 competitors in the Leyland 10 Mile Road Race, finishing in a time of just over fifty eight minutes. Other Harriers in attendance at Leyland were Claire Duffield who finished 33rd lady in a time of one hour and nineteen minutes, and Moyra Parfitt who finished 54th lady in a time of one hour and twenty eight minutes

Duddon (Press Date 07/06/07)

Riley Revels in Duddon Challenge

The western fells of the Lake District were the scene of the latest round of the English 2007 Fell Running Championships last weekend as athletes converged on the Duddon Valley for its' annual twenty mile fell race. Todmorden Harriers sent a party of fifteen to tackle the exposed and sometimes technical route, which includes 6000 feet of climbing and visits to the bleak summits of Hardknott Fell and Swirlhow. This year the route was bathed in sunshine, which although pleasant for race supporters and spectators caused a few of the runners problems as dehydration became a factor.



First Harrier home was Jon Wright in 19th place in a race won by Bingley veteran Ian Holmes who finished in a time of 2.42.35, just 15 seconds ahead of second placed Tom Owens after twenty miles of hard racing in searing temperatures.

Amongst the ladies, Todmorden continued their good season, with Ali Richards again showing the others the way to finish in 187th place overall, she was followed by team mate Chris Preston just seven places behind. A rejuvenated Jane Smith made up the team in 249th place.

Elsewhere there were good runs for Todmorden's second placed man, veteran 50 Phil Hodgson, and also for James Riley who showed his liking for the higher fells by finishing in a pleasing 4.15.09.

The Carnival/Waugh's Well (Press Date 14/06/07)

Runners Keep Carnival on Agenda

In the absence of this year's Hebden Bridge Carnival, the event's attendant fell race went ahead regardless from a quieter than usual Calder Holmes Park last Saturday.

Race numbers were up this year, with 41 athletes from a host of clubs lining up on the starting line, ready for the challenging 5.8 mile course, which visits Stoodley Pike via Erringden Moor and takes in 1150 feet of climbing.

Early in the race, pre race favourites Owen Beilby of Wharfedale and Todmorden's Chris Smale blazed the trail, followed by Bradford's super veteran Steve Oldfield. In the ladies race, it was Lisa Lacon of Holmfirth who dominated from the off and arrived at Stoodley with day light between herself and her pursuers.

By the time the leaders were starting their long run back from the Pike it was Smale who had asserted himself in poll position, eventually arriving at the finish in the park in a time of 40.40, eight seconds clear of Beilby and setting a new course record in the process.

Shortly afterwards Lacon followed the men over the line to take the ladies prize, an amazing six minutes clear of second placed Holly Williams of Keighley and Craven AC.

Other local runners to compete included Dave Collins of Todmorden who finished in seventh place overall, his time of 51.46 giving him second placed in the veteran 50 rankings. First Calder Valley man home was Clive Greatorex in fourteenth place and a time of 56.16, he was followed just two places later by club mate Steve Hunter. Calder's ladies were also in evidence, with Jackie Scarf registering as third lady in a time of 60.30.

After the race, organiser Andrew Bibby thanked the Local Authority for use of the Calder Holmes Park, Calrec for providing race parking, and his fellow Tod Harriers for help marshalling and administrating the race.

In the week prior to the carnival, the summer heralded the arrival of the season of evening fell races, kicking off with a victory for Todmorden's Shaun Godsman.

The Waugh's Well Race in Edenfield, near Bury, is tough little four miler with 1000ft of ascent, climbing the rough ground over Whittle Pike on difficult rutted trails to a steep final descent back to the animal sanctuary at Bleakholt. Godsman stamped his authority on the race in the very early stages and never looked like being caught after the first sharp climb onto the moor. He eventually finished in a time of 30.46, a comfortable 35 seconds ahead of the chasing Simon Thompson of Clayton.

Godsman was joined at the sharp end of the race by club mate and race record holder, Andrew Wrench, who crossed the line in third place with a time of 32.26. In the ladies race, Shaun's wife Sharon made it a family affair when she also finished in the prizes as 3rd lady, just a minute and a half behind Clare Kenny of Calder Valley who won the ladies race in a time of 40.46.

Other Todmorden finishers in the race were Kath Brierley, 5th lady in a time of 43.43, and Keith Parkinson who stopped the clock in 41.54, giving him a time of 58th. Also in attendance for the Harriers was Dave O'Neill, who came home in 113th place in a time of 53.49.

Kinder Trog (Press Date 21/07/07)

Alice Finds Form in Kinder Race

Last Saturday, Todmorden Harriers travelled to the Derbyshire peaks for the latest fixture in this year's fell championship. The Kinder Trog is a 16 mile slog around the peak hags on the edge of Kinder Scout with a testing 3490 feet of climbing thrown in on the way.

Nine Harriers made the trip south, and were rewarded with some bright sunshine intermingled with showers, a striking contrast to the last time the Harriers were in the Peak District which was in February for the Edale Skyline Race, an event beset by blizzards conditions and a wind-chill of minus 15 degrees.

The pleasant conditions brought the best out in the Harriers star Andrew Wrench who crossed the line 4th in a quality field, his time of 1.54.20 just two minutes adrift of Phil Winskill of local club Dark Peak who outsprinted second placed man, Adam Breaks of Calder Valley to win by just one second. Meanwhile, Alice Heath made her mark for the Todmorden ladies, finishing 4th amongst the women.

Rhys Watkins' and Chris Preston's Bob Graham Rounds (Press Date 05/07/07)

Bob Club is Just The Job For Harriers Duo

Todmorden Harriers were celebrating last weekend after a double success left two of their number the newest members of the 'Bob Graham Club'.

To become a member of the exclusive club it is necessary to complete the Bob Graham Round, a traverse of 42 peaks in the English Lake District that covers approximately 72 miles with 28,500 feet of climbing, to be completed within 24 hours. It is commonly viewed as the ultimate challenge for endurance fell running.

The two newly successful runners were Rhys Watkins and Chris Preston, who set off from the centre of Keswick at the stroke of midnight on Friday 20th. Despite their synchronised starts, both had their own teams of helpers and were running to slightly different schedules, only fleetingly seeing each other on route.

Despite generally good conditions, there was some sporadic rain and mist on the higher mountains, although this didn't seriously hamper them, and certainly didn't dampen their joy when they arrived at the finish in Keswick.

Finishing their mammoth journey with Chris having taken 22 hours and 30 minutes, with Rhys arriving in 22 hours and 15.

After finishing both were keen to thank their helpers, who were drawn not only from Todmorden Harriers, but also from the Achille Ratti Climbing Club and a host of other clubs from the fell running world.

The successful rounds mean that the number of Bob Graham Club members in the Harriers ranks has swollen to thirteen, which is approaching 10% of Harriers members, which is a remarkably high percentage for any athletics club.

Helen Windsor Memorial 10k (Press Date 29/03/07)

Headline

Todmorden Harriers enjoyed a jaunt to the countryside around Greetland last Wednesday to compete in the Helen Windsor Memorial 10k, organised by Halifax Harriers. The ever popular race had been chosen as a counter in the clubs 2007 Road and Trail Championships and 11 Harriers were amongst the field of 200 runners.

With competition in the ladies' championship hotting up, front runners, Mel Blackhurst and Sarah Glyde were both in the mix on the starting line, as was previous club Road Champion Claire Duffield.

Amongst the Todmorden men, Dave Collins and Keith Parkinson were both in attendance and looking to consolidate their season's standings.

As the race snaked through the undulating and picturesque countryside, the rain eased, giving some welcome respite from the day's downpours, although this fleeting break in the weather was never going to seriously speed up the race and make for fast times after the miserable conditions of the initial stages.

First Todmorden finisher was Dave Collins, who showed he could turn in performances on the roads as well as the fells by finishing in 23rd and breaking the 40 minute barrier. He was followed home three minutes later by Keith Parkinson, with Andrew Bibby next home in a shade over 44 minutes.

Shortly afterwards it was the ultra competitive Tod ladies who began to cross the line. First home was Sarah Glyde in 45.05, followed by Mel Blackhurst less than a minute adrift.

This result leaves Blackhurst still edging Glyde in the overall standings, but having run one race more. With Alice Heath also still in contention for the seasons honours, the converted end of year shield is still very much up for grabs with just five races remaining.

Other Harriers successes in the race included Moyra Parfitt taking the ladies' V60 prize, and Derek Clutterbuck scooping the men's V70 honours.