

## Recent Press Reports (by Richard 'I'll get mi crutches' Butterwick)

*Tod News 07/05/09 Stuc a' Chroin | Coiners*

At the British Championship race at Stuc a' Chroin, James Riley was the sole Todmorden representative to make the long journey to Perthshire for the extremely tough and boggy 14 mile route that included over 5000 feet of ascent. In a high quality field, and with occasional sleet showers, James was rewarded with a time of 3:22:21 and 214<sup>th</sup> place.



Closer to home, on Monday, a Todmorden quartet joined the field for Calder Valley Fell Runners' Coiners Fell Race. Starting from Mytholmroyd the route is a 7.5 mile tour of Coiners' country on paths, tracks and moorland, taking in Erringden Moor, Stoodley Pike and Bell House Moor and passes by the old coiners cottages of Bell House and Keelam.

The race was won by former Harrier Chris Smale in 47:51, with Nick Barber putting in an excellent top ten performance to finish in 52:13. Next Harrier home was Derek Donohue in 59:08. Clare Duffield battled hard with Michelle Dew of Rossendale throughout the race to finish in 60:55, just missing out on a top three ladies finish on the line. Mick Craven rounded the Todmorden entries off in 63:12 to take the men's team into 5<sup>th</sup> place.

*Tod News 14/05/09 Flower Scar | Fellsman | Mytholmroyd | Pendle's Clough | Fred Whitton*

The first of Todmorden Harriers' series of summer fell races began with the Flower Scar Race, incorporating 1400 feet of ascent and descent and a wide variety of terrain into its short 4 mile distance. With free entry and a tough but enjoyable course the race is a growing hidden gem in the fell calendar.

In mild and dry conditions the 102 runners set off with a dash across Todmorden High School's playing field before beginning the relentless climb up to Flower Scar Hill on grassy paths, muddy tracks and open moorland. After turning at the summit the route plunges down into the valley and traverses back to the start, with a short sting in the tail climb above Robinwood to test tiring legs.

Todmorden's speedy postman Alex Whitem quickly established a lead from the start over Calder Valley teammate Steve Smithies and gradually extended it during the race to cross the line one and a half minutes clear in a time of 30:34. First Todmorden Harrier to finish was Sean Carey in 4<sup>th</sup> place after a well judged run. Alistair Rhodes Dawson and Nick Barber followed in 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> places. The club was well represented in the top twenty with Paul Burnett, Dave Collins and Paul Brannigan all placing well. First Todmorden lady was Lauren Jeska as 3<sup>rd</sup> lady behind Wigan Phoenix's Deborah Wright.

Ultra distance event The Fellsman, a 60 mile plus fearsome undertaking in any conditions was all the tougher this year with gales, torrential rain and hail showers to contend with. A trio of Todmorden tough guys – Rhys Watkins, Colin Duffield and Jeff Walker - battled their way around the Yorkshire Dales to complete the course, achieving a time of just over 20 hours.

Dave Collins was close to recording a 2<sup>nd</sup> win of the year on Sunday, at the Mytholmroyd Fell Race after the leading group of runners went slightly astray. However the leaders quickly rejoined the optimum line, leaving Dave to settle for an excellent 6<sup>th</sup> place. Dan Taylor finished in 34<sup>th</sup> place, having set a 5k PB at Salford the previous day, and Lucy Hobbs was 52<sup>nd</sup>, also winning the ladies 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, with Mick Craven finishing in 59<sup>th</sup>.



Helen Hodgkinson added another ladies 3<sup>rd</sup> prize at the Pendle's Clough navigational fell race at the weekend.

A sizeable group of Harriers hopped on their bikes for the Fred Whitton Challenge, a grueling 112 mile sportive cycle ride around the Lake District taking in several steep mountain climbs and exhilarating descents. With unfavourable windy conditions, and rain and hail showers, Emma Osenton had an exceptionally strong ride to finish as 4<sup>th</sup> lady, and 155<sup>th</sup> overall, in time of 7 hours 11 minutes just 20 minutes behind the ladies winner. Sarah May was next to finish, as 7<sup>th</sup> lady followed by Keith Parkinson.

*Tod News 21/05/09 Geoff Doggett 5k | Great Manchester Run | Blackstone Edge | Old Counties Tops | Keswick Triathlon*  
Todmorden Harriers' Road Championship was the centre of attention last week with two races in five days. The undulating Geoff Doggett Memorial 5k Race in Littleborough on Tuesday, which was bathed in pleasant evening sunshine, enticed 37 Harriers including some of the club's junior runners.

Willy Smith of Keighley and Craven won the race in a time of 15:20 ahead of previous winners Ian Grime and John Brown. Jon Wright was the first Harrier over the line in 7<sup>th</sup> place, and together with Andrew Wrench and Nick Barber, in 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>, Todmorden finished as 2<sup>nd</sup> men's team.

The ladies went one better with Lauren Jeska, Claire Duffield and Lucy Hobbs taking the ladies first prize.

The second road championship race of the week was on Sunday, when 450 runners gathered for the tough hilly Eyam Half Marathon which snaked its way around the picturesque Peak District scenery where Nick Barber continued his current good spring form to finish 20<sup>th</sup> in a time of 1:27:39. Andrew Bibby was the next Harrier to finish with Roger Haworth just pipping Todmorden's first lady Mel Blackhurst.



Also Sunday, three Harriers joined the 33,000 runners for the Great Manchester Run and all put in excellent performances, despite a tough headwind in the second half of the race. Duncan Ritchie was hot on the heels of Haile Gebrselassie to finish in 210<sup>th</sup> place overall in a time of 39:22, Dan Taylor continued with his progress in his first year at the club in 362<sup>nd</sup> place, improving his personal best time to 40:44, and Kerry Edwards finished in 44:10 to be 74<sup>th</sup> female.

On Wednesday evening several Harriers swapped their usual weekly club social run to tackle the Blackstone Edge Fell Race, this year attracting a more modest field of 90 following its selection as an English Championship race last year. Ian Holmes of Bingley won in a time of 28:55. Sean Carey was the first Todmorden runner home a couple of minutes behind and in 7<sup>th</sup> place overall, taking the Under 16 prize ahead of a strong challenge from Joseph Crossfield of Halifax Harriers. Alistair Rhodes-Dawson in 18<sup>th</sup> and Martin Roberts in 25<sup>th</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> Vet50, were the next Todmorden runners to follow him in. Lauren Jeska finished 2<sup>nd</sup> lady and Sue Roberts 1<sup>st</sup> lady Vet45.

Chris Preston and Claire Duffield had a successful day out in the lakes on Saturday, at the Old Counties Tops Fell Race, where they finished first ladies pair. This classic 37 mile epic, features over 10,000 feet of ascent as it takes in the 3 highest peaks of the former Lake District counties: Helvellyn (Westmoreland), Scafell Pike (Cumberland) and Conistone Old Man (Lancashire).

Cold conditions for the Keswick Triathlon, also on Saturday, meant the planned 750m swim in Derwentwater was shortened slightly but competitors still had the 35km bike ride around the Lakeland hills and a 10km run to follow in showery blustery conditions. First Todmorden entrant to finish was John Preston 3 minutes ahead of both Simon Galloway and Sarah Warburton, who was 3<sup>rd</sup> lady. Phil Hodgson completed the course a minute further back and Kath Brierley set a respectable time as she enjoyed her first triathlon despite the unfavourable conditions.

#### **Tod News 28/05/09 Lanzarote Ironman | Helvellyn**

Two Todmorden Harriers travelled to the volcanic island of Lanzarote at the weekend, but there was no time for relaxing in the sun as a 3800m swim, followed by a 122km mountainous cycle ride and then a full marathon run lay ahead for 1300 competitors in the Lanzarote Ironman Triathlon.



Simon Anderton completed the sea swim in 1:14:32 with Emma Osenton 5 minutes behind, before a strong cycle section of 6:28:27 put Emma 50 minutes ahead of her teammate and with a 4:39 marathon run Emma completed the course in 12:52:32 to finish 9<sup>th</sup> in her age category. Simon's 4:09 in the marathon closed the gap and he crossed the line in 13:05:13.

Travelling a little less far, but still enjoying warm sunshine were the Harriers that took part in the 11 mile Helvellyn Fell Race. Starting from Bram Crag farm the race climbs extremely steeply up before a long undulating ridge run to the summit and back, finishing with a breath taking descent that tests runners' nerves and endurance.

First Todmorden Harrier to finish was John Preston in 2:20:43, followed by Dan Taylor 6 minutes later and Chris Preston, taking 3<sup>rd</sup> ladies V40, a further 4 minutes later. Peter Ehrhardt completed the distance in 2:42:04.

#### **Tod News 04/06/09 Duddon Valley | Hendon Brook**

Todmorden Harriers' had two tough challenges to tackle in last weekend's hot sunshine. On Saturday the club's Fell Championship visited Duddon Valley in the Lake District for the epic 18 mile fell race that incorporates over 6000 feet of ascent and descent as it travels around the head of the valley over the peaks of Harter, Hardknott, Little Stand, Swirl How, Dow Crag, White Pike and Caw.

Craig Stansfield was first Harrier to finish, in just under 4 hours. Kath Brierley was first Todmorden lady ahead of Rachel Skinner and Chris Preston.

Todmorden Results: 74 Craig Stansfield 3:59:34; 111 Kath Brierley 4:21:19; 130 Rachel Skinner 4:30:08; 133 Christine Preston 4:31:13; 138 James Riley 4:36:35; 139 David Wilson 4:37:52; 159 Kevin Booth 4:54:34; 176 Mick Craven 5:05:18; 196 Mandy Goth 5:33:18; 200 Louise Abdy 5:35:48; 204 Helen Hodgkinson 5:45:27.

The second championship race of the weekend was on Sunday, with the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Hendon Brook 13.5mile Road Race near Nelson. The race, which helps raise awareness of and funds for Holly Grove Special School, attracted a bumper turnout for the occasion. It once again delivered good weather to live up to its nickname of 'the hot one', adding to the enjoyable challenge of the very hilly course.

The performance of the day came from Moyra Parfitt, who knocked an incredible 5 minutes off the ladies v60 course record on a day when many runners recorded slower than normal times. After cycling across to the race, Phil Cook judged the course and weather perfectly to finish 5 minutes ahead of Duncan Ritchie to take the honour of first Todmorden finisher. First Todmorden lady to cross the line was Mel Blackhurst, finishing just ahead of Claire Duffield after a race long battle.



*Tod News 11/06/09*

Todmorden Harriers' were faced with a change of terrain as the English Fell Championships made a rare foray south to the West Midlands for the second round in the six race series. Church Stretton was the base for the Stretton Hills Fell Race, a 5.75mile short circular course. Whilst the surface underfoot was somewhat smoother and quicker than the tussock moorland more usually encountered in Calderdale, there were still plenty of familiar misty hills to conquer with the race taking in 2500 feet of ascent and descent.

With separate races for the men and women, the ladies were first up and Todmorden put in a strong performance with Sarah May finishing in 13<sup>th</sup> place. Philippa Jackson of Keswick won the race in a time of 54:12 to add to her win at the Half Tour of Pendle. Lauren Jeska and Kath Brierley had a close battle finishing in 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> places respectively, only three seconds apart, which lifted the Todmorden ladies to an excellent 3<sup>rd</sup> place team overall on the day, and into 4<sup>th</sup> place in the Championship Table after the first two rounds. Sarah May is now the highest placed Todmorden lady in the individual standings and lies in 21<sup>st</sup> place.



The heavy rain that had affected the ladies race eased only slightly for the men's race an hour later, where Pudsey and Bramley dominated the first three places with Rob Hope's time of 44:37 setting him clear of John Heneghan and Danny Hope. Andrew Wrench and Jon Wright ran a close race, with Wrench edging ahead at the end to finish first Harrier in 24<sup>rd</sup> place overall and 4<sup>th</sup> vet40. Jon Wright is highest placed Todmorden runner in the overall standings after two rounds and now lies in 14<sup>th</sup> overall in the English Championship. Dave Collins was the next Harrier home in 68<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> vet50, which moved him up 10<sup>th</sup> place in the vet50 championship standings.

*Tod News 18/06/09 Hebden Bridge*

Hebden Bridge was the venue for the Todmorden Harriers organised fell race on Sunday. The 5.8 mile route started from Calder Holmes Parks and wound its way up Erringden Moor to Stoodley Pike before circling round and returning to the park. Once again the race was blessed with blue skies and sunshine and attracted a record turnout of nearly 80 runners, including many unattached and first time fell runners.

James Logue of Horwich RMI comfortably won the race for the 2<sup>nd</sup> consecutive year, in a time of 44:46, just over a minute outside his own course record that he had set last year. Adam Breaks was the first of many Calder Valley Fell Runners in 2<sup>nd</sup> place, nearly 3 minutes behind, with another Horwich runner, Stuart Edmondson in 3<sup>rd</sup> place.

Sean Carey was the first Harrier to finish in an excellent 4<sup>th</sup> place. Paul Brannigan continued his return to form in 10<sup>th</sup> and Darren Tweed edged out Dan Taylor to finish 3<sup>rd</sup> Todmorden runner.

Whilst the men's team prize was easily won by Calder Valley, the ladies prize was a much closer affair. Jo Buckley, who also finished 13<sup>th</sup> overall in a time of 53:40 to take the win. Todmorden's Lucy Hobbs found the course to her liking to finish 2<sup>nd</sup> lady, followed by Calder's Sharon Godsman and then Todmorden's Lauren Jeska in quick succession. The race was then on for the 3<sup>rd</sup> counter to finish and it was Calder's Claire Hanson who clinched the prize. The Mytholmroyd based club also added prizes for the men vet40, Andy Clarke and ladies vet40, Gillian Wisbey.