

13 Lucky for Some

When the sun shines and I do a low key fell race I always come 13th. That seems to be the case this spring and early summer on a number of low key, friendly, enjoyable and scenic fell races.

The first in the sequence was the Fiendsdale race in March, I had not done the race before and wasn't sure what to expect. Went over with Roger and all the Harriers doing this one seemed to have a good time, I found it hard early on but made ground in the latter stages when the hills got steeper aided by some fortuitous route choices. The Bowland fells looked splendid in the brilliant sunshine.

Race number 2 was the Wardle Skyline, I always enjoy this race which after the initial climbing seems to get faster and faster. Nick and Alastair had said they were planning on doing the race at the Wednesday night pack run and we wondered whether we might sneak the team prize - unfortunately Rossendale pipped us to that, although Ali and Nick were both in the top ten. A really enjoyable run followed by a good cycle home over Blackstone Edge, thought I was cycling well until I realised I had left half of my kit at Wardle.

Race number 3 was the Crowden Horseshoe. The race is well organised following the Pennine Way onto Laddow Rocks and then Black Hill, the way back is surprisingly tough over Tottleyshaw Moor which was extremely boggy, a great descent at the end into Crowden campsite. I was the only Toddie at this one as well as the following week at Saddleworth. Enjoyed the short blast onto the top and to Pots and Pans, a great descent back - technical at first and then fast through the golf course. Talking to Boff Whalley at the end about how well Burnley have done this year (especially when you compare it to Bradford City) and how everybodies favourite Toddie - Geoff Reed - was getting on in Japan when the results were going up. I already knew - the sun was shining - I was 13th.

Think I could have managed a couple more 13th's if the weather had been better. At Mytholmroyd, I was all set for 13th until 7 runners in front of me went wrong and I went up to an undeserved 6th. At Flower-scar I was battling hard with Paul Burnett all the way round the course and he pipped me for 13th. Not done this race for a few years and I had forgotten what a great, tough little race this is. The Happy Birthday singalong for Paula at the start was a nice touch.

The only other fell races I have done in this period have been championship races when I have been nowhere near 13th - although think I got close to 113th and the bunny run where I was well back and beaten by loads of 13 year olds.



Dave Collins

Dentdale English champs race

Thanks

To all who helped on the Flower-scar and Hebden Bridge Races
Thanks also to race organisers
Jon Wright and Andrew Bibby.

Also thanks to Simon for the excellent Pendle Trip

