

Recent Press Reports (by Richard Butterwick)

Tod News 12/03/09 Half Tour of Pendle

The opening race of the English Fell Running Championships on Saturday saw three Todmorden Harriers finish in the first forty, as they looked to build on previous years' achievements.

Despite several absences due to illness and injury the club still provided 30 of the 400 entrants who lined up for the Half Tour of Pendle. After a fast dash from the start at Barley, the nine mile race quickly climbed up to, and over, the summit of Pendle Hill to the first checkpoint. With the forecast rain holding off until most had finished, visibility was good, allowing for spectacular views for those that had time to glance at them. A long steady descent followed with alternative routes being taken down to the second checkpoint at the Nick o' Pendle. The course then turned and headed towards Churn Reservoir, where a sharp climb took runners onto Spence Moor.

The highlight of the day was the precipitous descent down to Ogden Clough, which gave the downhill specialists an opportunity to gain several places. With numerous spectators looking on, runners hurled themselves down the seemingly near vertical grassy slope, with many slipping and sliding their way down to the stream crossing at the bottom. The final small climb of the day ensued, before the run in to the finish across boggy fields.

Most of the elite contenders for this year's overall crown were in attendance, with a close battle resulting in the first seven runners finishing within two minutes of each other. Bingley's veteran Ian Holmes eventually triumphed ahead of Pudsey and Bramley's John Heneghan and Rob Hope.

First Harrier to finish was Jon Wright in 28th place, with Sean Willis and Chris Smale coming in together about 30 seconds behind. In the veteran categories Sean placed 10th V40 and Chris 2nd in the V45. First V50 Todmorden finisher was Dave Collins.

First Todmorden lady was Lauren Jeska in 25th, followed by Clare Duffield in 28th. Lucy Hobbs continued her progress finishing in 38th to propel the ladies team into 5th place.

Tod News 19/03/09 Windmill's Whizz | Haworth Hobble | High Peak Marathon

Dave Collins recorded an historic win at the Windmill's Whizz fell race at Ogden Water on Saturday. It was no surprise that Todmorden Harriers supplied the winner of this 7 mile circuit of Ovenden Moor, with Chris Smale having triumphed in two of the last three years, but Collins was an unexpected winner after a sizeable number of the front runners had taken a wrong turning as a result of a directional sign that had been interfered with.

Proving that fell running requires sharp mental skills in addition to speed and strength, Collins who had won the Vet50 prize the year before, sportingly had tried to call runners back after they had gone astray from the route. He then progressed on his way and crossed the line to enthusiastic cheers as he realised he had won the race outright this year.

Meanwhile on the moors above Haworth, Hebden and Todmorden, many Harriers were tackling the 33 mile Haworth Hobble. The race that started and finished in Haworth, can be entered either as a pair or solo, and attracted a quality field of over 250 entrants as it formed the latest 'short' round in the 2009 UK Ultra Running Championship Series. Jon Wright continued his excellent current form over the longer distances with 4th place in a time of 4 hours and 30 minutes, just 15 minutes behind winner Jez Bragg.

Sue Roberts and Elise Milnes, who knocked one and a half hours off her previous attempt, finished as the first female pair and Chris Preston finished as 6th solo lady, 1 second behind Calder Valley's Clare Kenny.

The previous weekend had seen four Todmorden Ladies take on the High Peak Marathon, a 42 mile loop around the Derwent watershed in the Peak District. With a start from Edale just before midnight, much of the boggy route is covered through darkness. Battling against wind, rain and drizzle, competitors also found that the approach of daylight did little to improve visibility with much of the higher ground shrouded in clag.

The team, competing as Tod Totty, made up of Mandy Goth, Kath Brierley, Rachel Skinner and Emma Osenton completed the epic event in a time of 14 hours and 39 minutes.

Another team featuring Harriers' Jon Wright and Rhys Watkins recorded the 13th best time, but after losing one member early on were not eligible for the overall ranking.

Tod News 26/03/09 Fiensdale | Burnley 10k

Todmorden Harriers had a full weekend with races featuring in both the club's fell and road championships taking place.

First up, on Saturday, was the Fiensdale fell race with a 7.5 mile route that took in 2,500 feet of ascent and descent. Sunny skies greeted the race which was restricted to a select field of 100 entrants.

Danny Hope of Pudsey and Bramley was in a class of his own, setting a new course record of 1:03:57, on his way to a win by almost 6 minutes. First Todmorden Harrier to finish was Alistair Rhodes-Dawson with a solid performance to take 8th place. Dave Collins continued his rich vein of form with another vet50 win, and 13th place overall.

The ladies were not to be outdone with Lauren Jeska and Kath Brierley finishing 5th and 6th ladies, after a close nip and tuck battle throughout the race with just 3 seconds between them at the line. Jane Leonard won the vet50 category and together the trio took the ladies team prize.

On Sunday, the second round of the club's road championship persuaded 26 Harriers to make the short trip to Burnley for Blessed Trinity Sports College's well organised 10k race.

After a fast start past Turf Moor the 222 strong field climbed gradually past Townley Park, before turning back along Todmorden Road. A sharp climb up Mount Lane at the mid-way point punished those who had started too quickly and a further climb up Red Lees Road followed before a fast final 2 miles returned runners back to the finish. James Reed won the race in 33:16, a minute and a half ahead of the next runner.

With just over a minute separating the first 5 Harriers to finish, the men's road championship is already shaping up to be extremely competitive this year. First to finish was Scott Lapish with a strong run in 20th, holding off Joe Stansfield to the end. Next Harrier over the line was David Baldaro, followed by Duncan Ritchie.

The ladies road championship is also looking to develop into an exciting battle, with Lucy Hobbs recording an outstanding performance to finish 3rd lady. Kerry Edwards also had an excellent day finishing 5th, and Bev Wright completed another winning performance for the ladies team.

Prizes also went to Moyra Parfitt, 1st ladies vet60 and Derek Clutterbuck, 1st vet75 on a day when several Harriers recorded personal best times for the distance, despite the hilly nature of the course.

Tod News 2/04/09 Midgeley Moor | Bradford 10k | Coniston 14

Chilly conditions returned on Saturday for the Midgeley Moor Fell Race. Starting from Booth above Luddenden Foot the runners had to navigate across pathless heather moorland, leading to a variety of routes being chosen between the checkpoints and much debate over the best lines.

Matt Speak of Dark Peak won in a time of 37:49, trumping local Calder Valley runners Karl Gray and Shaun Godzman.

Calling on his excellent navigational skills once again, first of the ten Todmorden Harriers to finish was Dave Collins in 25th place in a time of 47:40, with James Riley three minutes behind. New signing Richard Gilbert finished a further three minutes back, in a time he will surely beat next year, after recently moving to the area.

Jane Leonard was the first Todmorden lady, and won the vet50 category outright, after a strong finish.

The weekend also saw another handful of Harriers spread far and wide with Rachel and David Henthorne posting respectable times in the Bradford 10k. Meanwhile in the Coniston 14 John Preston, Chris Preston and John Medcalf enjoyed beautiful Lakeland views as they circumnavigated Coniston Water.

Tod News 9/04/09 Pendle | Ampleforth Triathlon

Twelve Harriers took part in the short and steep Pendle Fell Race on Saturday. Cramming a total ascent, and descent, of 1500 feet into its four and a half mile length the race is a fast and tough workout. The Ladies team were once again successful with Claire Duffield, Helen Hodgkinson, Moyra Parfitt and Paula Howarth making up the winning quartet.

Simon Galloway was first over the line in a time of 42:23, with Claire Duffield 40 seconds further back to take 5th place in the women's standings. Moyra Parfitt finished first lady vet60 to add to the prize haul.

There was also success for Todmorden Harriers growing band of triathlon enthusiasts at the Ampleforth Legwarmer Triathlon this weekend. A competitive field of 200 gathered near Helmsey for the inaugural event, which was a British qualifier for this year's age group European Championships.

Sarah May and Sarah Warburton both recorded wins in their respective age categories with Chris Preston 7th in her category.

Sarah May, competing under Monmouth Triathlon Club's flag, exited the 750m pool swim in 23rd place, but after recording the fastest time over the two lap 39k cycle route had moved up the standings, and a quick second transition put her within 22 seconds of the lead. After a solid

performance in the 10k run she was rewarded with a tremendous 3rd place in the women's standings.

Further down the field three Harriers were having an exciting battle all of their own. Sarah Warburton exited the pool swim ahead of John Preston, before Phil Hodgson moved ahead of the pair by the end of the cycle section. The run then turned things on their head as John Preston led the trio in across the line, all finishing within 2 minutes of each other.

Tod News 16/04/09 Caldervale 10 | Anniversary Waltz

Todmorden Harriers swapped Calderdale for Caldervale on Good Friday for the latest round of the club's road championship. Six Harriers took part in the undulating Caldervale Country 10 mile race near Garstang in a 250 strong field. Matt Nuttall of Blackburn Harriers set the pace and won in a time of 55:01.

First Harrier to finish was Dan Taylor, who rounded off a busy week with his 4th race and was rewarded with 65th place and a time of 1:10:19, with Jeff Anderson was next over the line. A three-way close battle ensued throughout the race with Mel Siddall edging ahead of Bev Wright and Peter Ehrhardt, with less than 30 seconds separating them at the end. Barry Chapman completed the Todmorden contingent.

On Saturday, 18 Harriers set off from Stair Village Hall in the Lake District on the Anniversary Waltz Fell Race. The scenic 11 and a half route covers the Newlands Valley Horseshoe taking in several summits including Robinson, Dale Head and Catbells giving a total ascent of over 3,600 feet. Morgan Donnelly of Borrowdale won the race in a time of 1:35:59.

First Harrier to finish was Martin Roberts in 100th place and a time of 2:07:36, with James Riley, Derek Donohue and Mark Harris a further 10 minutes back. Kath Brierley was first Todmorden lady to finish a few seconds later, with Chris Preston and Lucy Hobbs following on.

Tod News 30/04/09 Three Peaks | London Marathon

It was a weekend for the long distance specialists as Todmorden Harriers tackled two of the country's highest profile running events off and on the road.

First up on Saturday was the Three Peaks Fell Race in the Yorkshire Dales. The 24 mile circuit starts from Horton-in-Ribblesdale and passes over the summits of Pen-y-Ghent, Whernside and Ingleborough adding up to a total ascent, and descent, of 5300 feet.

Rob Jebb of Bingley Harriers won this year's race which attracted 700 starters, followed by Ellenborough's Ricky Lightfoot and Karl Gray of Calder Valley, all of whom broke the 3 hour mark. First Todmorden runner to finish was Andy McFie who completed the course in 3 hours 57 minutes, breaking under the 4 hour mark that had narrowly eluded him in the previous two attempts. Next over the line was Derek Donohue who overtook Kath Brierley on the final climb of Ingleborough and held the advantage to the finish.

On Sunday, six Harriers joined the 35,000 massed for the London Marathon. First to complete the 26 mile course was Mel Blackhurst in a time of 3 hours and 36 minutes. The trio of John Medcalf, Chris Preston and Rhys Watkins followed in quick succession a further 7 minutes back. Richard O'Sullivan and Laura Sutcliffe completed the Todmorden contingent both posting respectable times.

Next Committee Meeting

Monday 11th May 7pm
Working men's club,
Halifax Road,
Todmorden

All welcome as usual.

Sports Massage

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