

THE JOY OF GRAND PRIX

After last issue's excessive and inappropriate article, this educative miscellany will hopefully readdress the balance. Shame about the title then.

With an total number of 71 Toddies having already competed in a GP race this year, many for the first time, here is a list of achievements and records to be broken or aspired to.

The GP format as it is scored today started in 1997; it then comprised 12 fell races and 12 (pure) road races. The minor changes since then have been awarding bonus points for English Championship races, the inclusion of Trail races for 6 road races in 2004, and expansion to 30 races last year and 36 this.

All statistics cover 1997 – 2008, excluding 'foot and mouth year' 2001.

Highest number competing in at least one GP race:

84 in 2008; 82 in 1999

Lowest number of competitors

61 in 1997; 64 in 1998

Highest number of Qualifiers (usual requirement - minimum of 8 races, a mix of road and fell)

34 in 1999; next closest 25 in 1998 – one of the years with the lowest total number of competitors!

Lowest number of Qualifiers

10 in 2007 (from a total of 66)

Highest turnout at a race: if you thought 32 at Coniston last year was impressive, it's well behind

40 at Joe Salt 5k in 1999, also 37 at Waugh's Well the same year and 38 at Blackstone Edge in 2000. In 1998 there were turnouts of 36 at Liver Hill and Wardle Skyline from a total number of GP entrants of only 64.

Lowest turnout: confident this would be a long road race, so no surprises that it's

3 at Wagon & Horses and Freckleton in 2005; at Oldham ½ marathon in 2006 and again at Leyland in 2007. For road running pedants; 2 at Wasdale in 1997 was the *lowest number of finishers* as 4 started.

Some individual achievements and highlights:

Most GP Championship wins:

4 by **Richard Blakeley** in 1997, 2002, 3 & 7. That's 4 victories for the 6 GPs he's completed. Moyra Parfitt is the only other person with more than one crown (2004 & 5)

Highest winning total:

832.6 by **Brian Scofield** in 1999, an outstanding score - 32 above the next best by Andrew Wrench in 2000; and by the largest margin – 43.8 points clear of Tony Shaw in second place with 788.8 (a total which would have won every other GP bar the above two years).

Highest score at a race:

111.7 by **Dave Collins**, last year at Oakworth. Brian Schofield bagged plenty of points in his 1999 season, 111.4 at Oldfield Gala – another low key event – and an impressive 109.2 at the tough Anniversary Waltz.

Most races in a season:

24 by **John Devlin** in 2002 – all the races in the calendar!! (He'd only managed 17 in 2000). Boluslav Barlow achieved 19 in 1998; Mel Blackhurst got to a creditable 17 in 2008, though this was from a possible 30 races.

Most prolific qualifier:

11 by **Peter Ehrhardt** – who has qualified every year, and only once with the minimum requirement. A superb and unrecognised achievement. The total number of GP races he's finished in these 11 years is 140. Closest to him are Keith Parkinson and Paul Brannigan with 9 and Dave O'Neill on 8 qualifications.

Lastly, something to try and avoid:

Lowest qualifying total:

516 by Ian Stansfield in 2008; but it goes to show that even if you average around 60+ points you'll still get an award at the annual presentation do.

Lowest score at a race: In normal circumstances a free drink would have secured anonymity, but.

47.2 by Dave Kite at Coniston in 2004 (Parky and Mark Anderton get their revenge for the year he beat them in the same race). As a stalwart of the club for many years he'll be quite proud of a mention.

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Appointed masseur of statistics and egos.