

BEN NEVIS

11 Toddlies travelled north to compete in the Ben Nevis Race. This unique 14km race has 1347 metres of climb and descent...and a unique atmosphere with all the runners parading round the sports field behind a piped band before the race.

The drizzle at the start had turned to bright sunshine by the finish. We had enthusiastic support from Bev, Caite, Andrew Wrench and Jim Smith (36 Bens to his name!). The race was won by Finlay Wild in 1:37 and there were some top performances by Toddlies. Most notable was first Toddie home, Jon Wright, completing his iconic 21st Ben Race in 1:47 (I think he's averaged 1:47 on his 21 consecutive Bens !) and proud recipient of the Connachie Plaque for this achievement - he was obviously delighted and was spotted dancing on tables several times during our very enjoyable post race pub crawl.

Next up was Craig Stansfield with another "well under" 2 hour Ben. Dan had another good race, he's getting closer to that 2 hour mark, and Hoss was well pleased to get up and down unscathed with a dodgy calf on his 19th Ben.

Robin, in his first Ben Race, stormed up the hill, took it steady coming down, and was rumoured to have been doing sub 6 minute miles on the last road section. He snuck up on Batman, who'd taken a more scenic descent route, raced him round the finish field and pipped him with 10 metres to go.

Batman's new descent route avoiding the road is bobbins. It included 1km of heather and boggy shite, and a long grass bank so steep it felt like landing a plane. I'm sticking to the proper route next time.

James, Rhys and Sue all completed in style, but poor Mick Howard had to DNF with a back problem... (Rhys finished the Ben, jumped in his car, drove to Newcastle and did the Great North Run on Sunday I hear Mo Farah kept looking behind just in case.

...and Mandy completed her 20th Ben, improving on her time in 2013 and now relishing next year's race. All being well she'll become the first woman to achieve the Connachie plaque. We'll let you know when entries open for next year (Janaury) and hope we can get a few coachloads of us up there to support her :thumbup: Maybe we should put it in the Club Grand Prix ???



Jon Wright, proud recipient of the Cognachie
Plaque after completing his 21st Ben Nevis Race



Jon showing good form at Ovenden 2013