

# Telford Harriers Newsletter

July 2007



Phew! It's all over again in the 2007 Tour of Telford as the Harriers celebrate in the Britannia. Read the full story inside !!



After much debate at the July Committee meeting it was resolved to affiliate the club to UK Athletics for the 2007/8 season.

The main reasons for this are to safeguard our immediate future as a Cross Country club, and also to provide our members with cheaper access to local events, e.g. the Sexarathon races, which continue to be extremely popular

amongst our club members.

If we were a pure jogging club, our decision would have been much more straightforward, and we would have joined ARC (the Association of Running Clubs), however we felt we would be letting our members down if we did not offer them the choice of competition, and we also felt that by taking the ARC route we would lose more members.

We understand that we may lose members as a result of this decision, however we felt that an AGM debate would have added little value as the majority of 'active' members interested have already expressed their views either on the club forum or at recent meetings and club nights, and that many of our members aren't bothered about the politics, but would soon speak up when their ability to compete over the Country was suddenly stopped.

Also, we needed to act quickly with the approaching Cross Country League AGMs and Six-Stage road relays.

Financially, we are no worse off than present, in that until 2007, we had to affiliate to Midland Counties AA for road and cross country at approx £30 each, then a membership fee of £3 per runner making a total of in the region of £510 (apologies - I may be a little out re: the affiliation fees, but not much - I don't have them to hand at the time of writing) .

To affiliate to UKA it will cost us £50 + £3/ member = £500 (based on 150 members). We will also receive 40% of any unattached levies we collect for the 2008 Ironbridge Half marathon, which haven't been available to us before.

Presently there are NO plans to raise subscriptions; however as the membership fee rises in April '08 to £5 / head we may need to review this in the light of the club accounts. A decision like that must have AGM approval because it is a constitutional change.

As a club, we reserve the right to change our affiliation policy for the 2008/09 season should the present arrangements prove to be unworkable, but due notice will be posted and a full debate encouraged - we will have several months of experience to go on by then.

**New Runners' Update:** John Strange, Lynn Strange, Sue Williams, and Steve Bajic continue to host a 'new runners' night on Monday night at 7pm from Stirchley. John is very keen for more Harriers to get involved to help him keep this going through the light nights- if you are interested (it isn't a major commitment) - please see John on a club night.

**Socials :** Plans are afoot to host the Club's Xmas Do at the Pheasant Inn at Admaston. Costs TBA and the price will include a buffet meal and a live band. **Sue Williams** is interested in creating a Social Calendar of events for the next 12 months - any ideas? See Sue. Interested in a Club Pub Crawl? Alan is looking at possible dates & venues ☺

### Results:

**Ironbridge 4 miles** - 13th Jamie Anderson 25:00; 28th Peter Taylor 27:01; 34th Andrew Dippie 27:30; 38th David Mole 27:58 ; 45th Andrew Davies 28:20 ; 52nd Mark Lines 28:45; 53rd Stephen Bajic 28:48; 55th Lucy Dalton 28:49; 65th Rob Day 29:14; 70th Martin Skehan 29:28; 82nd Daron Fincham 30:12; 86th Paul Hill 30:31; 93rd Rob Cherry 30:50; 96th Alan Jenkins 31:00; 100th Alan Robinson 31:06; 102nd Jeff Wright 31:08; 103rd Lisa Watkins 31:10; 110th Jo Cox 31:25; 112th Jane Staite 31:37; 113th Michael Rickus 31:38; 117th David Arnold 31:52; ???th John Strange 32.ish; 125th Mel Humphreys 32:24; 129th Serena Easy 32:39; 133rd Gwenan Jones 32:45; 145th David Samuels 33:33; 158th Emma Dodson 34:08; 164th Alison Larwood 34:28; 175th Sue Foster 35:03; 176th Vicky Robinson 35:04; 180th Jane Tucker 35:41; 188th Louise Steel 36:13; 194th Lois Dale 36:57; 200th Andrew Cunningham 37:33; 213th Sarah Slattery 38:44; 229th Christine James 42:09; 244th Cynthia Lewis 46:18

**Results:** Please, please let us have your race results - it's good publicity for the club. Either post them on the club forum or let Alan, John or Jeff know on club nights

**Club survey:** thanks to all who took part in the Club Survey; Alan is trying to pull all the results together and present the report at the AGM

### 3 Peaks.. in Yorkshire

I met up with my 2 new friends Gill & Roger the night before and we all set off with my brother in law Graeme to Yorkshire on the Sunday before. We stayed in Ingleton which wasn't too far away. Stopped over at Pen Y Ghent Cafe to register our entry for the next day, we were given a sheet to fill out with details & told to post it through the door early Monday. While we were there took time out to read the cuttings on the wall. What an atmospheric little place, full of great deeds by fell runners, cyclo cross heroes and mountain rescue :)

We retired to Ingleton and a search for some nice beer & food. 5 pints later I retired to bed, knowing I was going to feel pretty carp the next morning.

And so, it came to pass..

..got up early and managed to set fire alarm off in the pub where we were staying ( !!)

packed my stuff and realised I was packed for a run-type assault and the others more for a walk. Hmm. They looked mildly concerned at my trainers but I convinced them I was a fell runner after all.

The one minor worry I had was that I wasn't carrying enough to drink and after the boozy night previous this was going to tell.

So we made our way to the Cafe, pushed our stuff through the letterbox and at 8.15-ish set off for Pen Y Ghent. This was a steep walk up from the fields and we had to wait for Gill who was suffering a bit with sinus trouble, she did say it would wear off during the day though (It did) . We made it up to the Pennine Way path, which ran at a right angle and began our climb up what was described as 'steep scramble' on the map. It was a steep rocky scramble and we thought we were going the wrong way until I climbed up on to a ledge and saw some boot-marks, we guessed the way and after hauling ourselves up 20ft were soon on our way to the top and first peak. It was cold on the top and cloudy, windy. We thought it would maybe turn nasty but in fact the weather held out during the day. Descending from Pen Y Ghent we ran parallel to the Pennine Way, which seemed like a better footpath but we were following the Cafe Man's instructions. And of course, we got very wet and mucky in the bog that covers that side of the mountain! Gill fell into Hull Pot Beck and Roger slipped in shortly afterwards but that apart, this part of the walk was quite tedious, possibly because I was dying for a drink :) crossed the river Ribble on a Bailey Bridge then picked up the road to Ribbleshead. After an age, Ribbleshead came into view with the dramatic viaduct, which only yesterday had had 12 coaches worth of sightseers crawling all over it. Today though the place was deserted, save for a couple of cars and (ah, bliss) a mobile cafe where I could stock up with a couple of cans of Coke and some cake. A quick stop there and we then walked parallel to the Viaduct (I got a picture with a train going over it !!) .

We began the long trek up to Whernside by following the railway and then the Beck which rises from Force Gill, which itself was quite impressive. It got steeper but really was a long drag until we got on to some flagstones, which was another long drag but fortunately progress was considerably better than it would have been if the stones weren't there - there was deep smelly bog either side. Someone said the Army had got the stones up to the top of Whernside. Thanks!! Whernside became a steep climb on to a ridge and then eventually, after an ages, we were there. There was a nice shelter and we stayed for a few minutes but not too long and soon we were off again. The descent off the mountain this time was steep and rocky and very very hard on the knees and ankles. Eventually we got off the hillside and continued descending through lanes to the Hill Inn at Chapel Le Dale where we were overtaken by a walker on a mission who delighted in telling us how he had set off after us and was going to finish in front of us. What a f\*ck\*. Anyway I spared his embarrassment as he promptly got lost only 100yds in front of us, by showing him where the main footpath was on the map. As I said, bit of a %^&\* (!!)



By this time we were thinking about the last peak (it was looming into view) and I rang Graeme up (a rare occasion when I got a signal) and told him we were on target, and would meet him top of Ingleborough. We climbed steadily over moor then it became a yomp over more paved bog land (it seemed much, much deeper on either side). Then, a steep set of 'steps' up to the ridge to the top and I came into my own as I bounded up there, clearly using every last ounce of energy. Washed my face in the stream on top, and had a drink while waiting for the others, then I pressed on to the top of the mountain. Ingleborough is littered with stones on the plateau top and several cairns and shelters too. It's very unreal and the gathering rain clouds were a bit threatening!! We took a few pics, waited a few minutes for Graeme and then began our descent back to Horton. This was really hard, as by now we had been going for hours and all the joints were aching and not working properly. My lack of walking experience and generally knackeredness meant I was having

to run to make up some of the ground, strangely running felt ok. Just the walking hurt!!

Eventually we made it back to Horton. We rang the bell and the Cafe owner let us in. Instead of the pint of tea and cake Graeme had promised us though, just a brief clocking-in and then the Cafe owner turfed us out, obviously he had his own tea to attend to!

I seized up slowly over a few beers but had a painful nights sleep. I was delighted to finish in about 10.15 (needs to be done in sub-12 hours to count). We reckoned about 45 mins were lost to stops either for pics or a rest on the top. The walking pace was pretty good. Not sure if I could 'run' it though I would maybe like another crack at it sometime!!



**3 Peaks (Ben Nevis- Snowdon - Scafell Pike)** Pictured left is Tim "Smiffy" Smith with some of his mates on a recent successful attempt at the 3 Peaks/24 hours challenge.

## More News

**Hoodies** - Lisa Watkins is going to be ordering some club hoodies in the next couple of weeks, so let her know if you would like one.

They are available in sizes small, medium or large, XL and XXL. Colours available are white, navy blue, royal blue, orange, black, red, ash grey (light) or sport grey (dark).

They cost £11.50 each. Lisa will be at Sturchley on Tuesday and Thursday nights, or alternatively send your order to Lisa by email through the forum.

### Provisional Cross Country Dates: -

**North Staffs**, Oct 6th, Oct 13th, Nov 24th Stafford, Dec 8th Westwood High School.

**Birmingham**, Oct 27th, Dec 1st, Jan 19th, Feb 9th.

**Team Building** - In the spirit of a team building exercise (ie. any old excuse) ,we thought it would be a good idea to work on our socialising skills as well as our running technique. So after much deliberation we decided on trying regular post training trip to the pub. I know several members are already familiar with this practice but hopefully it will give member opportunities to yak in the warm (fen boy thinks far too much yaking gets done en-route anyway), a chance to get to know other people they don't actually run with, etc. Stay for one or have a few you've earned it!!!

Down to detail bring some clothes with you and freshen up at the rec . (No lynx please gentlemen us women won't be able to control ourselves) or meet at the pub later

At the Britannia in aqueduct 8.30ish onwards Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> August 07

## **Tour of Telford '07 - sponsored by Specsavers**

The **2007 Tour of Telford** was kindly sponsored by Specsavers, and once again capably organised by Mick Owen.

The race routes were exactly the same as for the 2006 version, we could hardly say the weather matched last year's highlights, though it did stay dry - which in itself is a record for this Summer ☺.

For those readers not familiar with the 'Tour' format, it's 5 short races, in 4 days over different courses, all carried out in a friendly competitive fashion. The event is only open to Harriers and their friends. The event's vision remains as always (1) no marshals (2) easy to remember courses (3) all at your own risk (4) it can be done by proxy (5) you keep your own time (6) and we trust you!

### **Day 1 - Wonderland 5k, Telford Town Park**

The rain dried up, the wind got up - and it was still warm! The race starts by the 'Wonderland' entrance in the Park, then down the slope, bear right on to the Silkin Way and all the way down to Aqueduct & back. It is a slight climb on the way back which makes it a bit of an ordeal, and this year we were treated to the gloopy, sticky puddles left by the downpours of previous weeks. Some of the runners were also a little heavy-legged after the previous day's Half Marathon at Shifnal, and this gave the others the chance to steal a march on them. 27 runners lined up at the start, with Jamie Anderson quickly establishing a commanding lead that he wasn't going to give up all week. Standards were high, with only a couple of minutes separating most of the other competitors, and in the Ladies' race there was little to choose between Lisa Yeomans and Sara Rex as they battled hard all the way round the course.

### **Day 2 - Club Handicap 3k**

Once again the Tour race was run alongside the monthly Handicap run, giving us the chance to increase the field to 47. The 2-lap, 3090m handicap race is the toughest little race series around, there is no place to hide out there. Scores are made and settled - there were the inevitable cries of 'cheat' as handicap times were announced!. As the handicap times are added into the overall finish times, this was the opportunity for some of last night's runners to take advantage of their generous handicap allowances and bring home the bacon; step forward, Sue Williams, Alan Jenkins and Jon Mahoney!! They didn't have it all their own way though as the charge down the hill was joined by an in-form 'Y Eye Man' Martin Skehan who was clearly out to prove a point, mainly that Sponsors can run, too.. Once again, there was nothing to choose between the runners, who all finished within a 2-minute slot, giving Gareth and co. a lot of hard work on the finish line. Once again, Sara & Lisa were too close to call. There were a lot of weary legs as runners made their way over to the Track, one competitor more weary than most, as Rob Day was really struggling with a virus.

### **Day 3 - Sturchley Mile**

There was a slight concern that the Track at Stirchley Rec wasn't going to be up to scratch this time; or more properly that it would be a bit of a mud bath. However, an early pitch inspection was passed and the grass declared ready to go. As in previous years, there were 3 'graded' races which made for great competition; we also were treated to the new Club 'bell' (ok, so it was actually, a triangle). Pete Hough was given the triangle for the night.... and he proved beyond a shadow of a doubt, he has no musical ability whatsoever.

Race 3a - And to Mike Sprason's best chance of winning a race for years. The Sprase rolled back the years as he and new boy Bob Eatough battled it out very closely over the four laps & 9 metres (this is "approximately" a mile - depends how accurate the Council track marker is) however Bob wasn't to be denied, and he out-kicked Mike in the last 80m to come home first. Louise Steel just about had enough to hold off Sue Williams at the other end of the field but there was little between all 7 runners.

Race 3b - Jon Mahoney wasn't going to make the same mistake as he did last year - he went off from the gun and slowly drew away from Rob Cherry Alan Robinson & Alan Jenkins who all thought he was going to fade on the last lap. Clearly he had the last laugh - Alan J managed to out-kick the others for 2<sup>nd</sup> but the gap to first place was much too large. Top ladies Sara & Lisa Y were joined by Lisa Watkins for this race and Lisa W certainly gave the others something to think about with a 10-second lead.

Race 3c - Rob Day bravely tied up his spikes - and lined up for the 'elite' race, and for a lap was able to mix it with Jamie until it all became too much for him and the illness took over, but then a succession of runners went past, all in the vain hope of catching Jamie. Even Andy Seal, who was guesting in this race had no answer to the relentless pace of the main man. Rob did manage enough to finish in front of Andrew Davies, struggling with injury himself, and Jim Rounsley, another Tour debutant.

Race 4 - Up the Wrekin (& back)

The weather was still holding on, as the runners assembled at the foot of the big hill. The main aim is to climb the 1300ft monster, up & back along the 'tourist path'. The recent rain has left the path strewn with stones and with a lot of erosion, as if the hill wasn't hard enough. Right from the off, the runners had to negotiate a car, descending from the Halfway House! Once again Jamie used his strength to establish a lead over Marc Gadsden & Martin Skehan. The other runners found it hard going and soon, walking up the slope was the order of the day (based on the theory that once one walks, all walk). At the turn, Jon Mahoney was about to demonstrate just how BAD he was at descending (though he would tell you he was saving himself) and on the way down the drama happened....firstly Marc Gadsden slipped and fell, damaging his arm and leg on wet stones, secondly Lisa Yeomans managed to take the wrong turn somewhere near the Halfway House and ended up backtracking, allowing Sara to claw back some much-needed time and throwing the Ladies' contest wide open once again. An excellent performance from Jazzy Wright got him some much-needed time bonuses and we all stood in awe as Dave Arnold punched the air with delight at his beating the half-hour. The chocolates were much appreciated too at the finish - they were ours, weren't they? Oh, and the clock packed up.



Race 5 - Britannia Burn-Up 5k

You begin to wonder - when the Organiser asks if people know the route.... and they almost all say 'NO'. Oh well, last day and all that. People were as usual comparing how tired they were. Mick and the crew were busy getting boxes of goody-bags ready, there were the usual laughs and cheers and 'bang' (or rather, beep) and away they went. Normal order was resumed for Jamie, but a tremendous sprint for the line by Martin gained him that coveted second spot. There were some improved times all the way down the field and Jazzy Jeff, Dave Arnold and Alan J all contrived to run together (no mean feat), finishing just in front of the main ladies race. Lisa once again saw off a brave effort from Sara to make this year's Ladies prize and title her own.

(left - all smiles at the finish !!)

We all retired to the Lounge of the Britannia Inn for the presentations, speeches, photos and a few bevvies and story-swapping! Roll on 2008. Make sure YOU'RE there.

Thanks to Mick, Ann, Jill, Michelle, Pete, Grace, Specsavers, the Brit and anyone else I have missed - it's not intentional, honest!!