



ON THE START LINE

A Month Of Meltham AC Racing

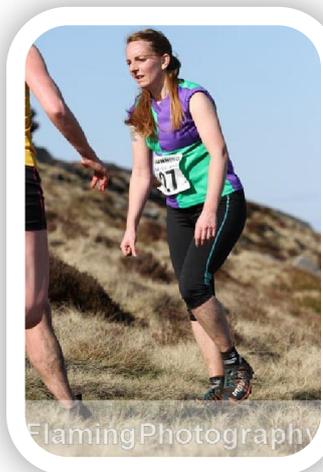
April 2015

Hard Hills At The Huddersfield Half

The first out and out Road race of the year was the no compromises Huddersfield Half Marathon; 13.1 miles of hard ups and speedy downs. Sarah Brewer and Susan Sheehan were Meltham AC's representatives on a slightly overcast, but overall great day for distance racing.

Sarah took on the early pace and stormed home to finish 6th Lady (2nd in her category), 51st overall; whilst Susan stuck with her in the early stages before crossing the line on the other side of the 2 hour mark—scoring enough points to take her to the top of the Handicap Championship after the first three races.

Results— Sarah Brewer (1.55.00 / 51st); Susan Sheehan (2.06.32 / 82nd)



Big Climbs at West Nab

Gathered in a field on a Saturday afternoon, seven Meltham vests enjoyed the sunshine before a Championship Fell Race on home territory. Would local knowledge be an advantage, or would it simply add to the fear of such a physically demanding race — 1,650 ft of climb in 6 miles of racing? As it turned out, a little bit of both. With the course quickly funneling into a single file descent, the sprint up Calmlands was essential; James Young got it just right and found a great place to settle into his stride, whilst Jeff Miller went off too fast and paid for it later on. Sam Bolton made a great start, showing no ill effects from the challenge of the Paris Marathon, whilst Ray McArthur, Tina Crowe, Gilly Markham and Fiona McArthur all got ready for the big climbs to come.

The first loop around the back of the farm saw Sam and Ray get ahead of Jeff and the second climb stretched the pack out as the long slog up West Nab loomed. Once around the trig point the descent is a relief in one way, but at a fast pace it can test the 'jelly legs' of any runner, and the final descent back down Royd Edge is a 'sinus clearer'. A change to last year's finish saw an unwelcome climb back up the Edge and then a sprint to the finish. Tina's downhill skills saw her make up a load of time and places at the end and everyone finished with a smile, with 85 of the 88 starters crossing the line.

Results—James Young (49.40/18th); Sam Bolton (56.22/44th); Ray McArthur (58.38/48th); Jeff Miller (61.57/57th); Tina Crowe (67.09/68th); Gilly Markham (72.28/76th); Fiona McArthur (75.15/83rd)



A Month of Marathons (part 1)

A busy month for Marathons kicked off on the 12th with the increasingly popular Paris Marathon. Sam Bolton led the field for Meltham AC with Simon Edwards hot on his heels, but perhaps not as hot as the Gitane smoking runner Sam passed towards the end! Maintaining a fast pace throughout, with a cracking 5.40 min/mile at mile 15, Sam started to feel the pace over the last three miles, but still managed to cross the line just before Simon, whose consistent miling gave him the strength for a fast finish. Andy Lang was the third Meltham runner to complete the course, with Amanda Crozier a little further back, clearly aerodynamically compromised by a fetching set of Bunny Ears...

Also racing on the 12th were Wendy Sykes, Emma Bee and Anne Tinsdeall, this time in the slightly less romantic Sheffield, and only the half marathon distance. Despite the less glamorous settings, and the uphill start that was also into a headwind, Emma and Anne both recorded PB's for the distance.

Results—Paris—Sam Bolton 3.39.53; Simon Edwards 3.48.40, Andy Lang 4.22.15; Amanda Crozier 4.57.09: **Sheffield**—Emma Bee 1.57.34; Wendy Sykes 2.03.13; Anne Tinsdeall 2.14.54



A Month of Marathons (part 2)

A week later in Manchester another four Meltham vests lined up for a marathon, with Penny Ditchfield and Lisa Wilyman eyeing up the competition at the start line. Pre-race jitters were put to bed early though, as Penny ran well from the start, and then got faster through the race, finally finishing 6th F35, with Lisa sticking to her for most of the race before finally finishing 10 minutes back. Tony Crosby had a strong race, finishing in the top third overall with Hayley Lomas also finishing in the top half.

Meanwhile, nearer home Andy Potter ran the 'less flat' Huddersfield Marathon and finished 51st overall.

A week later and the Marathon Month was brought to a finish in London, with James Young, Steph Bailey and Mark Cope joining 37,000 others on a drizzly April morning. Nothing was holding back James though, as he trusted his training, and knocked off the miles like a metronome (apart from once dipping under 6 minutes for mile 20); working through a sudden stitch and busting his PB apart as he flew in under the three hour barrier. Steph Bailey was excused from her Meltham Vest as she ran for Kirkwood Hospice and raised a massive total of over £4,000 for the local charity and came home in under 4 hours. Mark Cope started strong, but started to struggle as the race progressed and ended up succumbing to illness; but importantly still finished the race and earned his medal. Do we believe him when he says 'Never Again'...?

Results - Manchester— Penny Ditchfield—3.06.07; Lisa Wilyman 3.15.10; Tony Crosby 3.37.21; Hayley Lomas 3.52.41: **Huddersfield**—Andy Potter 5.38.39: **London**— James Young 2.54.51; Steph Bailey 3.55.10; Mark Cope 3.58.56





Week 8

In the four Parkruns since last issue we have seen another 5 PB's (James Young, John Gray, Tony Daniels, Mark Hoath and Pete Dukes), 2 First Ladies (Emma Burke, both at Huddersfield) and 1 outright win (James Young at Black Hill).

For those of you who don't know, Graeme Lee was the driving force behind the Parkrun Championship, and as such we would like to take a moment to celebrate his personal statistics as he recently completed his 50th race.

It has taken him three years, in which he has competed at 20 different locations, including his 50th race at Singapore, the flattest course he has run. He has racked up an impressive 20 PB's, with a best overall finish of 3rd, which he has achieved three times, (Rotherham, Concord and Old Deer).

He claims Rother Valley to be his favourite, Fountains Abbey to be the prettiest, Barnsley the hardest, and home race Huddersfield is still his fastest (an impressive 19.06).

Congratulations on the 50, Graeme—we salute you!

Top 5 After 8 Parkruns

1. Emma Burke
2. Sharon Whitworth
3. David Sadler
4. Susi Sadler
5. Simon Edwards

Fastest PR Times This Year

Men— 17.14 James Young
Women— 19.40 Penny Ditchfield



World Champion — Again!

The sun was beaming on Easter Monday as Penny Ditchfield returned to defend her title at the annual World Coal Carrying championships in Gawthorpe. With 25 competitors around her, and a 20kg sack of coal on her shoulders, she set off at a blistering pace, supported by Andy Whitworth at her side who carried the Meltham colours over the traditional 1,012m course.

With the strain on legs and lungs kicking in at the halfway point, Penny was spurred along by the masses of support for her along the roadside and dropped all the competition by striding away to win by a massive 19 seconds over her nearest competitor, and narrowly missed the course, and as such World, record by just 5 seconds. Stating afterwards that '...to win is the best feeling in the world.' I think we can safely assume that she will be back next year for a hat-trick of wins, and a good shot at that World Record!

KING OF THE HILL #1 TRUNCE #2

The first King of the Hill took place on April 1st, but the weather was no joke—cold, wet and windy, and yet four brave Meltham AC'ers lined up and smashed it on the day. Penny Ditchfield set the fastest club time on the night, and broke the overall women's record whilst she was at it! Three men followed her in; Christian Lloyd, setting the third fastest time on the night, Martin Bayliss and Sam Bolton showing good pace just a few strides behind. Pete Dukes and John Docker also took on the challenging conditions, albeit on two wheels rather than two legs.

Trunce #2 was run in completely different conditions to the first, and as such the times came tumbling down. Jeff Miller, Mark Crowe and Robin Stewart all turned up to better their times from the previous mudbath, with Paul Elliott running for the first time this season and Rachel Tomlinson making her debut on the tough Monday Night course. The first sprint was faster than usual to take best advantage of the stile crossing, with Paul arriving just ahead of Jeff and Robin, working a gap ahead of Mark, and Rachel following on, unaware of what was to come. The positions held steady for the rest of the race, with the river down to ankle depth and the woods wonderfully runnable. Robin made the best improvement, coming within 1 second of taking a full 10 minutes off his best time, proving that the right shoes on the day can make the world of difference!

Results - KotH—Penny Ditchfield 25.44; Christian Lloyd 28:15; Martin Bayliss 28:40; Sam Bolton 28:41

Trunce #2 Paul Elliott 32.21; Jeff Miller 33.22; Robin Stewart 34.57; Mark Crowe 38.52 Rachel Tomlinson 46.34

DESPATCHES

- ✦ With over 1000 ft of climbing over 3 miles, Herod Farm fell race (grade AS) organised by Glossopdale Harriers is not to be underestimated. In an almost record breaking attendance of 137 runners, David Sadler came 77th, with a time of 33:08; while Susi Sadler, who was coaching a fell-racing "debutante" (in at the *steep* end!) and who stopped to help an injured runner, crossed the line in 43:13. First male was Simon Harding of Macclesfield Harriers (23:34) and first female was Caitlin Rice of Glossopdale Harriers (27:34).
- ✦ 3 Meltham runners lined up with 145 others for the annual oddity of the Chocathalon — a 9k race involving Tunnocks and other chocolatey goodies — Robin Stewart took a top ten finish with 48.05, Neil Hopkinson took 48th with 57.57 and Andy Potter 64th with 62.21. No reports on how many bellyaches...
- ✦ A Fell favourite, the Wardle Skyline, saw Steve Perren lead the Meltham contingent with a 61.17 (89th), ahead of Jeff Miller's 62.42 (105th) and Christian Lloyd's 64.04 (116th) out of 186 runners.
- ✦ Ally Young and Amanda Crozier took on the Kielder Dark Skies race, setting off at 16.37pm and running into the clear northern skies to marvel at the stars and satellites as they passed overhead, finishing the marathon distance before midnight at 23.15
- ✦ David and Susi Sadler took on the Highland Fling Ultra on the 25th April, a tough 53 mile race with over 7,500 ft of climbing. The weather was unkind by being too warm for the distance and they were forced to withdraw at 41.5 miles, but they come away with some fantastic memories and a Radio 2 dedication to boot!
- ✦ Hayley Lomas returned to the Fellsman once again, this time unable to finish the 61 mile course, pulling out at 32.1 miles.
- ✦ Paul Elliott, Christian Lloyd and Steve Perren were back in the Lake District for the 17km Hawkshead Trail, a hard and fast trail race amongst some beautiful scenery, on a stifling hot day. Steve and Paul raced all the way to the dreaded final climb, the 'Coffin Trail', whilst Christian was feeling the heat on the day. Steve's climbing strength gave him the advantage and got to the top first, allowing him to stretch out on the downhill to the finish, finishing in 1.27.23 (23rd overall). Paul was close behind finishing in 1.30.01 (30th) with Christian pushing to the end with 1.34.55 (53rd).

WANT ONE OF THESE



MAY CHAMPIONSHIP RACES

Road and Trail

3rd Bluebell (Sold Out)

6th King of the Hill

27th Dovestone Diamond (Sold Out)

Fell

2nd Cake Race

11th—Trunce 3

31st Saddleworth Fell

Been racing?

OTSL want to know all about it:
Email: jeffmilleruk@hotmail.com

Photos and race reports are both welcomed and encouraged.

Keep training, Keep racing,
and we'll see you all next month...

...On The Start Line...