

## Roadhogg News

### Back on the Road Again?

This weekend should have seen a number of road races as thoughts turn to spring and road runners emerge from their winter hibernation. Although we did manage the Stilton 7 in the teeth of beastly easterlies, we'll leave that one for the next edition and bring you more tails of mud and mayhem.

### Snow Patrol

Attitudes to risk vary greatly. Some of us will train in snow and others will head for the gym or enjoy an extra rest day. It is certainly true that the effect of a couple of days off on fitness will be unmeasurable but the psychological benefits of getting out when the weather is bad can't be dismissed. Beyond the obvious advice to wrap up well and wear off-road shoes, little changes to the way we run can help us to stay upright. Apart from running more slowly, slowing right down on corners and avoiding sharp changes in direction, it is best to shorten ones stride and concentrate on landing on a full foot right under the centre of gravity. Also, more so than any other time of the year, it is crucial to study the surface ahead for clues about grip.

### Muddy Winners

The cream of Roadhogs' muddy runners have been making their mark in the Derby Runner League individual standings. Loan signing Dave Pearce came out top of the pile for the V50s and Richard Garnett won in the V60s. Other notable performers were Julie Dutton and Dave Lodwick, both 2nd V55, Hitesh and Dale (4th and 6th V55, respectively).



February 2018



### Through the arched window

Charnwood Hills Race report,

### SHORTS

The Kibworth 6 has been re-scheduled for Sunday May 27th. Details to follow.

Thanks to all those who attended the AGM. There will be a report in the next edition.

Picture credits: Bryan Dale, Clive Mason.

## Parkrun Tourism with Brian

### Walthamstow

Walthamstow, N.E.London is the only parkrun I know run entirely on grass so the locals all run in spikes or studs. Saturday was wet and muddy, more akin to a cross-country course than the usual parkrun. The route is a 3 lap tour of about 20 football pitches and reminded me of being at school, the only thing missing was the Games Master shouting “come on Feldman, lift up those knees and run”! The constant traffic roar of the North Circular Road outside, emphasised how quiet it is at Victoria Park or Braunstone.

### Folkstone

My time at Folkestone was 32:18, and I came 183rd. It was a lovely run along The Leas, which is a cliff top promenade, with a blue sky reflected off a very calm sea. However, unlike Victoria Park, with a hill you can push over then run on, at Folkestone there was one continuous climb, before tumbling down the hill to turn and Sisyphus-like toil up again. The overall elevation is supposed to be less than Victoria Park, but it didn't feel like it. To make matters worse the first person home was aged 15-17 and completed the run in 15:36, with a PB of 15:33!

## Parkrun PBs in February

Janet Hall

Lee Hennell (twice)

Sam Crouchman

Harry Short

Lee Fairclough (twice)



Lee: Pacey parkrunning

---

## Midland Counties Regional Cross Country Championships

29th. January 2018

This was certainly a championship course at Woolaton Park, with hills, tree trunks to clamber over, and mud, mud, and more mud. The club had a good representation with Dave Lodwick, Harry Short, Sam Crouchman and Brian Feldman, two less than we needed for a team but better than before. Valerie Spezi was our sole Lady runner. (The results are added at the end of this piece)

Each of the four laps entailed climbing up to Woolaton Hall three times from different angles, then clambering over two tree trunks, (why?) before tackling The Swamp. The glutinous mud was up to mid-calf at some points and only the lightest and daintiest runners managed to conquer the sea of mud easily. Needless to say, that description did not apply to any of our runners, and certainly not the author!

Bearing in mind that Sam was in the Couch to 5k group in October this was a magnificent performance as was that of Harry who only began running a year ago.



I was last by a long way and as I came around to start my last lap, with all the other runners having left the field, a marshal asked if I was going to complete the course! Stupid man, as if I was going to tramp 3 laps and not finish. To my surprise as I rounded the corner to commence the climb up the first hill I saw Dave and Harry waiting for me, and they then kept me company all the way round to the end, exemplifying club support. At the Finish the same marshal as before asked if I had enjoyed the run. Of course I did, why else go out in the freezing cold, tramp through a swamp if the experience was not enjoyable.

Here is Sam braving The Swamp

---



Valerie gliding effortlessly through the mire.

---

Men:

Dave Lodwick 323rd. 59:38; Sam Crouchman 364th. 61:59; Harry Short 401st. 64:20; Brian Feldman 473rd. 91:38.

Ladies:

Valerie Spezi 235th. 52:56.

Brian Feldman

## Charnwood Hills

We were greeted by a cold bright morning but there was an icy wind, so only the bravest opted for just vest and shorts. There had been plenty of recent rain, so it looked like it was going to be a hard day at the office. This was confirmed when the usually trusty surface of the playing fields turned out to be decidedly squelchy during the warm up. The 350 places for this classic, Leicestershire's only 'long' fell race, were snapped up in minutes. Five Roadhogs had managed to gain a golden ticket; Kathryn, Aruna, Steve W, Hitesh and myself. Aruna had spent the week agonising on whether to give up her place because she had committed to a 20 mile Marathon training run on the Friday, but the lure of those hills was too great.

I have run cross country and fell races for long enough to know



Hitesh deep in thought

---

that time is a fairly imprecise measure of performance (conditions and courses vary from year to year). However, that doesn't stop me setting myself time targets, alongside the usual one of finishing in the top 100 (something I had never quite achieved in 6 previous attempts). This time it was to break 2 hours (after last year's 2.02), although I can't say I was confident, given the conditions. The race starts with a lap and a half of the playing fields to spread the runners before the first narrow section and the start of the mud proper. By the time we reached Bradgate Park, it was quite a relief to have some decent ground to run on. There was a slight diversion because the section alongside the wall (by the ruins) was too wet and the risk of damage to the park too great.

You could see the crowds gathered on top of Old John from some distance and the noise built as we approached. The battle between legs (screaming for you to walk) and ego (demanding you don't 'fail' in front of such a large audience) results in an undignified shuffle (running, 'but not as we know it Jim') until, with relief, you make it to the arch and a welcome respite from climbing. The next couple of miles are all about avoiding slips and golf balls before we hit the climb up to Broombriggs. Once over the steep initial climb, the surface was good but the constant kissing-gates really upset your rhythm. The path down to the road crossing offered a brief opportunity for the braver descend-ers to take back a few places before the grind up to the top car park at Beacon Hill. As I crossed the road it was a relief not to see any of the leaders coming the other way.

Once the Beacon was conquered there was a welcome chance to put on speed with the next mile being almost completely downhill. I always struggle with the nasty little kick up after the bottom car park but fairly soon the road crossing appeared again and it was time for the easier pass across the foot of Broombriggs. Four hundred pairs of feet certainly hadn't improved the path over the golf course and then we were onto the hill variously known as Heartbreak or Heart Attack Hill (other names are not printable). Think of an inclined skating rink and you'll get the picture. You could get a marginal improvement in grip by flirting with the bushes at the edge but this meant dicing with thorns.

Support around the course was excellent but the biggest concentration of people was on the Hunt's Hill side of Bradgate. As you reach this point there are still 3 miles to go and the racing tends to be pretty full on, so it's good to see friendly faces and receive a bit of encouragement. With the terrain being open you



---

Aruna enjoying the support on Old John



Kathryn: Big improvement on 2017

---

can see those in front quite easily, which gives you targets to aim for. By the time I got to the last two fields I had no one behind me, just a couple of possible victims in front. One must have been tired because he didn't put up a fight but the other raised his game and showed me a clean pair of heels (metaphorically at least) on the run in to the finish. Cross line, stop watch, hands on knees to recover. Look at watch; 2.00.01!

Kathryn was next in, carving 10 minutes off her 2017 time. Steve followed. He'd been training well but a calf niggle in the run up probably cost him on the day. Hitesh was not fully recovered from a virus, so had to opt for safety rather than speed. At first we weren't sure what had happened to Aruna but we eventually found out that she'd missed the cut off at the foot of Broombriggs by just 3 minutes and been forced to turn back by the marshals. She ended up running 11 miles for a DNF.....

Dave Lodwick Dave Lodwick 89th; 2.00.01, Kathryn Evans 146th, 2.11.05; Steve Wheeler 243rd, 2.29.39; Hitesh Pandya 283rd, 2.47.23.

## Grace Dieu

After the pouring rain at Holly Hayes and then the driving snow at Allestree, it was bright and sunny as the runners arrived at Grace Dieu Prep School for the 5th race (of the remaining 6), so the first conversation in our mobile hospitality centre was now nice the weather was for a change! Roadhogs' girls rallied to the call and we had 8 running, and 11 guys. We welcomed back Bec and Gurmit after missing a couple of races ... both are strong runners for us. Gurmit turned up looking like a Bollywood star in his stylish track suit. Mya Bromwich ran in the junior race again; she said that she worked hard and is strong on the up-hills, but loses ground on the downs. There's a good cross-country pedigree coming through there and I'm sure that Mya will keep trying and keep improving.

The senior course at Grace Dieu is 2 laps around grassland and woodland, with a long and slight uphill drag at the start of each lap and a couple of steams to splash through later on. It was shorter than the ad-

vertised 5.5 miles. There were a few muddy sections but the underfoot conditions were generally better than the previous races. The men set off first and the ladies gave chase 10 minutes later. Dave Pearce, our non-counting second-claimer, was first home for the men once again and it's a pity that he doesn't score for us but there you are. Gurmit was next (great running Gurmit), with Richard not far behind and running so well as a V60 that he's a cert to win that category. Chairman Dave was next in, continuing his run of form and riding high in the V55s, and then Sam, Harry, young Max, Steve and Marcus completed the scoring positions. For the ladies, Leah is another Roadhogg in good form these days and led the team home, with Bec close behind and chasing all the way round. Julie and smiley Janet completed the scoring team. Our other runners were Hitesh, Baz, Helen, Trudy, Usha and Siobhan, who all gave their usual 101% for the team.

Back in the tent, the post race cakes and coffee were once again so appreciated and a vital part of the recovery process. In the results, both teams scored better than at Allestree and the men consolidated their overall 5th position and the ladies climbed a place to 9th. Thanks to all.

The final race of this season's league is at Bosworth Battlefield on 11th March ... looking forward to seeing you all there, let's finish on a high.

#### RESULTS:

MEN: 50th Gurmit Singh 34.58, 67th Richard Garnett (V60) 35.49, 101st Dave Lodwick (V55) 37.37, 125th Sam Crouchman 38.52, 146th Harry Short (V40) 39.48, 164th Max Barratt (U20) 41.55, 199th Steve Wheeler (V45) 43.30, 216th Marcus Shaikh (V40) 45.03, 225th Hitesh Pandya (V55) 45.38, 239th Baz Barratt (V55) 48.17, 269 finished.

2nd CLAIM: 24th Dave Pearce (V50) 32.37.

LADIES: 50th Leah Boatman 43.30, 52nd Bec Bromwich 43.59, 103rd Julie Dutton (V55) 48.26, 115th Janet Hall (V40) 50.24, 124th Helen Arthur (V45) 52.18, 153rd Trudy Sharpe (V45) 57.59, 166th Usha Goyal (V45) 62.55, 167th Siobhan Ridgeway (V40) 63.12, 174 finished.

TEAMS: Men 4th, Ladies 7th, Combined 5th.

TEAMS AFTER 5 RACES: Men 5th, Ladies 9th, Combined 5th.